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**A VIEW**

**OF**

**THE PRIMITIVE AGES.**

**IN TWO PARTS.**

**TRANSLATED FROM THE WELSH OF**

**THEOPHILUS EVANS,**

*Formerly Vicar of Llangamarch and St. David's, in  
Breconock.*

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**BY**

**Rev. GEORGE ROBERTS.**

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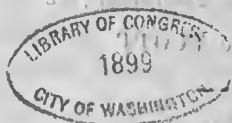
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**1834.**

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THE AUTHOR'S DEDICATION.

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REVERENDO ADMODUM IN CHRISTO,

Patri, ac Domino, Domino

NICOLAO CLAGETT, D.D.

EPISCOPO MENEVENSI.

S.

*QUUM pro mea virili, Præsul admodum Venerande, nec minimo quidem Labore conatus essem, quo facilius Rudimenta Fidei Christianæ imbiberent nostri Monticolæ Britanni; vix me existimem a Re proposita longe esse digressurum, si Magnæ Britannicæ Notitia eis innotesceret Lingua vernacula.*

*Satis mihi exploratum habeo, quam spissum opus ac difficile sit a retro Sæculis Res gestas in lucem proferre, quum Veterum Scripta, tantam stragem passa sint, quantum nostra (ut Gildas, olim conquestus, notavit) adeo ut veritas Involcuro quondam oblegi videatur: Veruntamen cum talis Notitia Fructus adfert uberrimos, lubentiore animi consilio me in hanc Provinciam contuli; et quale quale sit ex plerisque, quot supersint, Autoribus, excusis etiam et Mss., hoc opusculum excerpsi; quo Plebs nostra rudis, ad Res a suis Majoribus gestas, non omnino foret Barbara; sed ut avitos mores, et primævi sæculi religionem puram et adhuc incontaminatam, in hoc Commentariolo veluti in Specillo quodam, animadvertat, videatque.*

*Hic igitur libellus, Antistes dignissime (nunc castigatior et jam tandem Trutinam Severiorem apud me passus) qui sub Clientela vestra lucem denuo ambit, Res Britannus complectitur. Pars prior de Britannorum Origine narrat; et Belli vario exitu gesti cum Romanis, Pictis et Saxonibus, Specimen exhibet; nec non et Morum et Idololatriæ Majorum, antequam Evangelii lumen iis illuxisset: Posterior, de Prædicatione et Evangelii cursu usque ad nonum a Christo incarnato Sæculum; quo tempore Majores nostri a prisca Fide decedentes, labe Romana conspurcati sint.*

*Si fas sit mihi augurari, Spero equidem hosce Annales Cambris nostris nec ingratos fore nec prorsus inutiles; dum videant Ecclesiam nostram Lege sanctitam, ut non a S. S. Scriptura, ita ne minimum quidem a prisca illa Ecclesia Catholica, rececisse; adeo ut Anglicana (ut cum Cl. Berrigio dicam) merito Primitiva nuncupetur Ecclesia, ultimis hisce Temporibus, rediviva.*

*Dum tu, Doctissime Præsul, in gravissimis et Religionis et Reipublicæ negotiis summa non sine laude versaris; dum omnigena Eruditione, et Apostolica Morum Sanctitate ornatus, Ecclesiæ Menevensis, Decus es et Præsidium; liceat mihi Monticolis Cambriæ Capita Religionis explicare; liceat hanc Historiolam texere, et non omnino oscitanter otio torpescere. Deus O. M. te servet diu incolumem; et e Militanti, in qua tanta Dignitate et Animi candore præsides, ad Triumphantem, cui tantopere anhelas, serius eveharis. Quod revera precatur.*

*Vestræ D.*

*Observantissimus*

*THEO. EVANS.*

## PREFACE

### TO THE SECOND WELSH EDITION.

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It is now about twenty-four years since this book was first printed. At that time I was young; and, although I then read hastily the greatest part of the printed history of Britain, yet, after having opportunities to search and examine for myself, the principal information I obtained was gathered from old manuscript Chronicles in the Welsh language. The system I adopted, in revising and amending this work, was, *1stly*, to read all the *Latin* histories written by foreigners, respecting Britain in ancient times; *2dly*, to read the old Chronicles of the *Saxons*; *3dly*, to read the modern publications of eminent writers, in the *English* language; *4thly*, to compare the whole with the old histories written and preserved by the *Britons* themselves.

With respect to the *Latin* histories, although the authors were intelligent, able, and learned, it is difficult to believe all they say, for the two following reasons: *1st*, They were *Romans*, and were never in this country; consequently, the greatest part of their writings were founded upon relations made to them by their military officers: *2d*, They were too apt to sound their own praise, as appears evident from the history of Julius Cæsar, who, notwithstanding the great boasting displayed in his book, was obliged to seek safety in escape. It is, indeed, the nature and the misfortune of all nations to speak well of their own courage, skill, and bravery, and contemptuously of that of their enemies and opponents.

But little credence can be given to the chronicles of the Saxons, for this plain reason---they were illiterate at the time of the cruel contentions between them and the ancient Britons: and, if any one should find fault because this history of the wars does not entirely coincide with the English chronicles, let him know that it was impossible for the Saxons to detail the particulars of the first wars, because, for more than a hundred and fifty years after they occurred, they were unable to read: therefore, the accounts they give must be founded on tradition and common report.

In the late excellent works of Mr. LELAND, Archbishop USHER, Sir HENRY SPELMAN, Bishop STILLINGFLEET, &c., the authors have evidently traced events in the fairest and most impartial manner, though they could not judge correctly of writings in the Welsh language.

As it respects the Britons, it is certain that they could read and write long before the birth of CHRIST, if not from the time of BRUTUS, the Greek, who came from the city of Troy;\* and, if a great number of their writings had not been lost, an intelligent Welshman could doubtless obtain much historical information, which it would be impossible to gather either from Latin or English records. But, notwithstanding all that is lost, there is yet much to be learnt from the manuscripts of the ancient Britons; and it has been my principal design, in this work, to compare them with the ancient histories of the Romans and the Saxons, and, to the utmost of my ability, to select therefrom the uncorrupted truth.

There are many things in this book, which were never before printed in any language. These selections, like hidden treasures, were obtained with great difficulty from old and decayed manuscripts, and, it is thought, form the chief ornaments of the work.

In the first chapter it is said, that MADOG AP OWEN GWY-  
XEDD and his followers formed connections by marriage with the old inhabitants of America, and became with them one people, more than five hundred years ago; but it appears that they keep separate, and preserve their own language to this day. The Rev. MORGAN JONES (a clergyman, who was born near Tredegar, in Monmouthshire) relates that, in the year 1660, he travelled through the wilderness until he came to a part of the country which was inhabited, where he was taken prisoner, on suspicion of being a traitor or a spy. While

\* It would be difficult, perhaps, to substantiate this opinion, for of BRUTUS the Greek we have never before heard; but, as the author, in a subsequent part of this work, undertakes to prove that Brutus was one of the earliest settlers in Britain, and that to him the ancient Welsh were indebted for some of the arts and sciences, we must take it for granted that he also taught them to read and write. It is not stated, however, at what precise period he became their instructor.

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the natives were making preparations for his execution, he sighed heavily, (as he had good reason to do,) and exclaimed, in Welsh, "O God! have I escaped so many dangers on the ocean and on land, and must I now be massacred like a dog?" On hearing these words, an officer came up to him, and embraced him, telling him, in his own language, that his life should be spared; and he fulfilled his promise. He treated him with kindness, and brought him to that part of the country called *Dyffryn-pant-teg*,\* where his countrymen resided. Mr. Jones remained amongst them upwards of four months, being highly respected, receiving from them daily every token of friendship, and preaching the Gospel to them, in the Welsh language, three times a-week.†

Where it is stated, in this work, that the Romans borrowed many Welsh words from the ancient Britons, such as the LATIN words *terra*, *aer*, *mare*, *annis*, *mel*, *mutus*, from the WELSH *tir*, *awyr*, *mor*, *afon*, *mel*, *mud*, (in ENGLISH, *land*, *air*, *sea*, *river*, *honey*, *dumb*,) some will perhaps mock, and say, "This is a made-up story, without foundation." Be it known to such, that these words were always in the language of Ireland, to which country the Roman arms never extended. It was therefore impossible for the Irish to derive them from the Romans; and I should scarcely deviate from the truth, by saying that these words were in the Welsh language before ever the foundations of Rome were laid.‡

No one denies that the ancient Britons borrowed many Latin words, whilst under the government of the Romans; and yet they did not entirely lose the corresponding words in their own language. Indeed, the two languages were miserably intermixed at that period, as appears from an epitaph lately discovered in the church at BRYNBIGA, in Monmouthshire, which was placed there long before the Saxons came to this kingdom. This epitaph is a mixture of Welsh and Latin: "*Noli cloddi yr Ellrhod Caerlleon, Advocað Llaenhaedd Llundain a Barnwr Bedd Breint apud Ty'n ei Aro, Ty Arale; Selif synwybr summa sedum Usk, val kylche deg kymmyde Doctor kymmen lleua Loer in i llawn oleuni*;" the Latin interpretation of which, in the opinion of the learned, is as fol-

\* A Welsh word, signifying a very pleasant valley.

† See Gentleman's Magazine. March, 1740.

‡ Camd. in Ordovie, p. 659, Llwyd Annot.

lows: "*Noli effodere Professore[m] Caerlegionensem, Advocatum dignissimum Londinensem et Judicem sacri Privilegii apud Fanum Aaronis et Fanum Avalonia, Solomonem Astrologum summæ Civitatis usq[ue] tenentis circiter decem Comotos Doctorem Eloquentem Lunam lucidam ni plenilunio lucentum.*"

I have nothing further to say, than that there are very many things in this edition, which did not appear in the first. I think the language will be found clear and intelligible throughout North and South Wales; and, adorned as it is with many familiar comparisons, easy to be understood, I trust that the whole history is as correct and complete as can be desired. Although the book is small, yet, such as it is, receive it, I beseech you, as the best present, and the most perfect history of the ANCIENT BRITONS, of which the unworthy Author was capable.

THEOPHILUS EVANS.

MAY 1, 1740.



## PREFACE

### TO THE FIRST TRANSLATED EDITION.

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IN presenting to the public an *English* edition of the Ancient History of WALES, translated from the work of a popular Welsh author, the publishers are of opinion that they are thereby rendering an important service, not only to the *natives* of that country who are now resident in the UNITED STATES, but to those also who are of Welsh *extrac-tion*, and, indeed, to *all* who are desirous of becoming intimately acquainted with the early history of the ANCIENT BRITONS.

As a people, unsubdued by foreign power, when the rest of Britain fell into the hands of the invader—unshackled by the galling chains of tyrannous misrule, whilst their nearest neighbors were writhing beneath their oppressive weight—the ancient Welsh were silent but not unconcerned spectators of the deadly feuds which were continually agitating their sister kingdoms. Buried in the deep recesses of their own mountains, where no sound was heard that did not breathe of Liberty, they pursued “the even tenor of their way”—profiting by the fate of those who were compelled to bow in abject submission to the yoke of ROME, the proud and haughty mistress of the then known world.

Hitherto, it is believed, no correct history of WALES has been published in the *English* language. It is true that several attempts have been made in England, by men of learning and intelligence, to elucidate certain insulated points in

the annals of Ancient Britain; but, as yet, nothing like a connected, impartial, and complete history has been given to the world. It is, indeed, surprising to witness the almost total indifference which late writers have manifested concerning the origin, civilization, manners, customs, and religion of a country, which, although it may not, in modern days, have given birth to *many* celebrated men—though it may not, within our recollection, have been famous for the literary enterprise of its people, or have sent forth to “glorious war” the “choicest spirits of the age”—was, in former times, ere EDWARD waved his blood-stained banner over its happy homes, distinguished for the bravery of its population, and the invincible love of Liberty by which they were actuated.

To the descendants of the ancient worthies of WALES, it must be peculiarly gratifying to peruse the records of their lives and actions, which are now extant; for they abound in narrations of the most spirit-stirring character. They tell of a race of people, whom dangers could not appal—whom superior forces could not vanquish: of a people, who, by dint of persevering and untiring industry, caused the uncultivated and barren mountains to become fruitful, and, amidst innumerable hardships, laid the foundations of their country’s prosperity.

To these, especially, who, spurning the oppressive hand which controlled them as with a rod of iron—bursting asunder the bonds which a partial and unequal government had imposed upon them—left the dwellings of their fathers, and sought an asylum in THIS LAND OF EQUAL RIGHTS, a history of their great progenitors must certainly be “worthy of all acceptance.” They will there discover numerous incentives to their own zealous exertions in the cause of moral and intellectual

freedom ; and, following the examples therein recorded—treading in the footsteps of those eminent men to whom they are indebted for their existence as a people, they cannot fail to reap the high reward which is ever the desert of virtuous deeds.

In the translation of this work, great care has been taken to preserve, as nearly as possible, the *spirit* of the original. The *style* is necessarily somewhat altered : several antiquated expressions, which, had they been translated *literally*, would have been scarcely intelligible, have received a polish befitting the literature of the age ; and it is hoped (every proper allowance being made for the difficulty of the undertaking) that the translation will be found as correct as could be expected. For the opinions of the author, some of which may perhaps seem unreasonable, the publishers, of course, disclaim all responsibility. They publish the work as they find it, with an assurance from individuals who have read it in the original, and upon whose judgment they can rely with confidence, that it stands high in their estimation, as a faithful and impartial history of events, which have hitherto been little understood by the world at large.

The Poetry interspersed through this volume, by way of illustration, or as authority for the expressed opinions of the author, is unavoidably defective, owing to the difficulty of finding words to convey the *true sense* of the original. It is believed, however, that, defective as it is, it will answer the purposes intended. It is not introduced as a specimen of *genuine* poetry, for to that appellation it certainly has no claim ; but, as the work would have been incomplete without it, it was thought advisable to attempt the versification. CRITICS, therefore, (should any such peruse the following pages,) will

be but poorly rewarded for any pains they may take to mark its defects, or point out its inelegancies. The writer has no pretensions to the reputation of a PoET: the few attempts he has made at *rhyming* have been rather the trifling *amusement* of leisure moments, than the studied *employment* of weeks or months; and, if he has succeeded in pleasing HIMSELF, and eliciting the approbation of a FEW FRIENDS, he has attained the only objects to which his ambition prompted him. He stands far aloof from the spiteful snarlings of the petty critic, as well as from the more elaborate *brow-beating* of the professed reviewer. Alike unknown to the world and to them, he asks not their countenance, and he fears not their contempt. At some distant day, probably, he may appear before them in a more enlarged capacity: *then* there shall be no occasion to apply to him the oft-quoted motto, "STAT NOMINIS UMBRA."

This work is divided into two parts.

The first part describes the origin of the Welsh nation, traces their genealogy, narrates the circumstances attending their first settlement in Britain, and gives a full description of the wars in which they were engaged, at various periods, with the Romans, the Picts, and the Saxons. On the subject of the first settlement of Wales, various opinions are entertained by historians; and, as there is but little positive evidence on that point, we have heretofore relied chiefly on tradition for the knowledge we have obtained in relation thereto. The author of this work, however, has endeavored to clear away the obscurity; and no person, who reads his history carefully and impartially, can fail to commend the deep research he has evinced in collecting and compiling the various authorities he has quoted to substantiate his opinions. He appears to have been well qualified for the task he undertook, sparing

neither labor nor pains to search out the truth, to remove doubts, to reconcile the apparently conflicting testimony of the old historians, and to render his work an unexceptionable reference on all disputed points.

The second part is equally interesting. It contains an account of the introduction of the Christian Religion into the Island of Britain, and the success which attended its first preaching; together with a sketch of the doctrines of the Primitive Church, and the morals of the Primitive Christians.

Upon the whole, the publishers cannot refrain from commending this History to the attention of the community at large, being fully persuaded that its perusal will afford much pleasure as well as information. They could easily extend this preface, in pointing out the interest and utility of the work; but they forbear—being willing that it shall stand or fall on its own intrinsic merit.

GRIFFITH H. ROWLAND,  
WILLIAM SCOTT.

EBENSBURG, Pa., *July*, 1834.



# A VIEW, &c.

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## PART I.

### CHAPTER I.—*Of the original stock of the Welsh people, and their first coming into the Island of Britain.*

IT is a great and unprofitable task to relate the history of the WELSH people—to recount the misfortunes which attended them in every age and country in which they have resided, since the confusion of languages at the Tower of Babel. It is painful and lamentable to relate how ungrateful they were to God, how ready to rebel against Him, and to fall into the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. This was the cause of all the calamities which befel them; and, because our forefathers drank iniquity like water, the proverb was verified, “The workers of iniquity shall be destroyed:” so we, like many other nations, when our sins had ripened, were “left few in number, because we would not obey the voice of the Lord our God.” *Deut.* xxviii. 62.

There are no people under the sun, who have retained their country, their language, and their privileges uncorrupted, undiminished, and without mixture. The Jews have long complained, “Behold, we are servants this day; and for the land thou gavest unto our fathers, to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it.” *Nchem.* ix. 36. The Turks have subdued the land of Judea, and the Jews have not a “foot-breadth” therein. The

Greeks are scattered throughout the world, and their homes and country are in the hands of the Turk. The Romans also, (who, at the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, were masters of the greatest part of the then known world,) have been for many centuries undistinguished as an empire—their language is destroyed, and their once unbounded authority scattered to the winds. But WE, a remnant of the Ancient Britons, still occupy a portion of this great Island, of which we were once the sole possessors; and retain our original language, if not perfectly, yet in greater purity than any other nation in the world.

In former times, great ignorance was manifested concerning the original inhabitants of Wales. I have read of an English author, (called by the Welsh LITTLE GWILIM,) who said that “a boy and a girl were found in a cave, in the time of King Stephen, of a green and very strange color, unlike all other persons ever seen in the world; and it was the common belief, that they had come up through a hole from the bowels of the earth.”\*

Notwithstanding the absurdity of such a story, there were many amongst the Greeks and Romans—men of learning and general intelligence, who were equally ignorant respecting the first inhabitants of this island. Some, indeed, professed to believe that they sprang out of the earth like ephemeral plants.

It is a tedious undertaking to trace the origin of our nation correctly, and to follow the intervening streams till we arrive at the fountain head. The subject is involved in much obscurity; but I will endeavor to remove the cloud which overshadows it, that our progress towards the truth may be plain and unobstructed.

When ADAM transgressed the commandment of God, and ate of the fruit of the forbidden tree, he and his posterity were made subject to sin; and, in course of time, the wickedness of mankind so abounded and multiplied, that “it repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth;” *Gen. vi. 6*; and in the year of the world 1655 the Almighty

\* Gul. Ninbrig Rer. Anglio lib. 1, chap. 27.



sent a general deluge, or flood, to drown both man and beast : but righteous Noah and his family found favor in the sight of God, and were preserved from the catastrophe in a vessel which we call an ark.

About a hundred years after the flood, the descendants of Noah undertook to build a "tower, whose top might reach to heaven." *Gen.* xi. 4.\* It is thought by some, that their intention was to secure themselves against any future visitations of the flood. "Let us make us a name," said they, "lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." Others think that they were journeying towards the Garden of Eden ; and, because the surrounding country was so rich and beautiful, producing all kinds of vegetation and fruit, and every thing agreeable to the senses, they had a desire to remain there—they and their posterity for ever : they therefore built a city and a tower, lest they should be separated. But, whatever their intentions were, the Lord did not suffer them to be accomplished ; for their language became suddenly confounded, so that the people were unable to understand each other, and could not possibly pursue their accustomed avocations.

Previous to this, there was but one language amongst men, viz. the Hebrew ; but from this time they became necessitated to convey their ideas to one another in seventy-two different tongues, as old historians inform us.† In the confusion which naturally arose out of this state of things, the meeting of two persons who could understand each other was a source of great pleasure ; and they would journey together until they found a third. Thus those who could speak the same language were gradually collected in separate bodies : And who do you think spoke the Welsh language at that time, but GOMER, the eldest son of Japheth, son of Noah, son of Lamech, son of Methuselah, son of Enoch, son of Jared, son of Mahalaleel, son of Cainan, son of Enos, son of Seth, son of Adam, son of God ?

Thus I have led you back to our progenitors ; and, if their

\* Robins' *Annales Mundi*, lib. 2, p. 36.

† *Orig. Saer.* lib. 3, c. 6.

posterity are any better on this account, there is no race of people in existence, who can trace their language to an earlier period than we can. I have not the least doubt that this portion of our history is really true.\* The historians of former ages affirm this: and what better authority can we have for events which occurred in those times, than that of the journals and chronicles then written? Besides, the learned men of the present day, with very few exceptions, agree on this point; and, if other testimony were required, we might refer to the name by which we are generally known. (*Cymro*,) which plainly proves our origin; for there is very little difference between *Cymro* and *Gomero*, as it is easy to observe.

Again: we read, *Gen. x. 5*, respecting the posterity of Japheth, "By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided." "The isles of the Gentiles" alludes, undoubtedly, to Great Britain and Ireland, if not to the greatest part of Europe. Of Shem and Ham it is only said, "These are the sons of Shem and Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, and in their nations." *Gen. x. 20—31*. Hence we infer, that there were as many mother tongues at the building of the Tower of Babel, as there were races of people on the face of the whole earth. Of mother tongues, I mean such as are really so. There are not more than twelve countries in Europe, where an original language is spoken in its purity.† The others are only a mixture and corruption of words derived from various languages, such as the English, the French, the Spanish, &c.

The old historians dwell much upon the courage of the descendants of Gomer, and their skill in the art of war, after their arrival in Europe. Indeed, war was the only object to which they turned their attention, especially during their residence in France: (for it is certain that our ancestors, the ancient Welsh, were the original inhabitants of France, having settled there about the time of, or even prior to, the birth of our Saviour, as I shall shew hereafter.) It is true that, at the commencement of the Christian era, the Romans had subdued many nations with the sword, and possessed great power both on sea and land; but they were at first as

\* *Vide Pezron's Antiq. lib. 3, c. 5.*

† *Vide S. Purch Pilgr. vol. 1, lib. 1, c. 12.*

so many wandering marauders, and in the service of the Welsh, who were then their masters: and even after they became powerful, and began to molest and oppress their weak neighbors, they were obliged to submit to the arms of two Welsh brothers, named BELI and BRAN, the sons of Dynwal Moelmud.\* They had not courage to face those famous men, but fled to their caverns for safety and concealment.

The reason why there are so many Welsh words in the Latin language, is that the Romans were for a number of years under subjection to our forefathers; and it is natural to suppose that the weak would imitate the powerful, and that the servants would use the same language as their masters. It is not true, as the learned Pezron proves conclusively, that we borrowed such a multitude of words from the Romans.† It is not denied that our ancestors did derive some words from the Latin, whilst the Romans domineered in Britain; and this was for nearly five hundred years, from the time of Julius Cæsar until A.D. 410. But these were few in number, and the original words were still retained: for example, *yspeilio* (to rob) is a Latin word, but the old and proper term, *an-rheithio*, is still preserved: the Latin word *rhod* (a wheel) is in common use, but the original word, *olwyn*, is not obsolete.‡

Some, perhaps, will say, that these are fabrications, concerning the settlement of France by the Welsh, and their being so celebrated in war. However improbable the assertion may now appear, there is no relation in the whole range of history which can be relied upon with greater safety. I will not speak of the resemblance between the manners, customs, and practices of the French and those of our ancestors — of their similarity in religion and the knowledge of the Deity, for their Priests and Druids were the same. Laying these aside, (although many arguments are maintained upon far weaker grounds,) I will take the opinion of Julius Cæsar, written eighteen hundred years since. This general, who, during a ten years' war with the French in their own coun-

\* *Galf. Monem*, lib. 3, c. 8, 9.

† *Vide Camd. Brit. Ed. Gibs & Lloyd*, p. 658-9.

‡ *Antiq. of Nations*.

try, and a subsequent residence in Britain, had ample opportunities for observation, says, that the languages of the two kingdoms were very much alike, as far as he was able to judge from hearing them spoken.\* An author who wrote about fifty years after Julius Cæsar,† and another about forty years later,‡ both corroborate this opinion. Probably, there was little, if any, more difference between those languages, than there is now between the dialects of North and South Wales. It is certain, therefore, that they were one and the same people, descended from the same original stock.

Besides this similarity in language, let it be considered how near France and England are to each other—that they are separated only by a small arm of the sea, and that, on a clear day, one shore may be seen distinctly from the other; and it must be allowed, that the Island of Britain was first peopled from the country nearest to it, in the same manner as Ireland was first settled by emigrants from Britain.

But we must observe, that France was not the original name of the country now so called. It received this appellation, from the people who now reside there, who, being at first barbarians, subdued the kingdom by slaying and burning its old inhabitants, about the time that the Saxons or English (another race of barbarians) treacherously wrested this island from the Britons. It was first called GELLI, (a Welsh word, signifying a thickly-wooded country,) and we hear the same word used in a similar sense to this day. France was a beautiful country, abounding in vegetation of every kind. The ancient inhabitants called themselves *Gryddelod*,§ the Welsh word for Irish—sometimes *Gwylliaid* || (wild men)—but the common name in history is *Cymri* ¶ (Welshmen.)

There is a tradition still in existence amongst the common people, (although it is generally looked upon as a mere fable,) that the Irish in former times resided in England and Wales; and this is true enough, for the Irish and Welsh were at first one and the same nation. Indeed, it can hardly be thought

\* *Caes. Com. lib. 5, p. 80.*

† *Strabo Georg. p. 405.*

‡ *Tacitus Vit. Agricol. p. 637.*

§ *Celta.* || *Galli.* ¶ *Cimbri.*

otherwise, when we look at the similarity in the two languages. Whoever will peruse an Irish grammar, will see that the nature of that language requires the letters to be changed at the beginning of words, the same as the Welsh.

Any person, who will take notice of many of the ancient names of rivers and mountains in England, will readily believe that the Irish inhabited that country when those names were given. It is well known that *Wysg* is the name of a large river in Wales, and that *Con-wy*, *Tywi*, and *Wy* are different names, of the same signification. The principal river in the kingdom is called *Tafwyr*,\* that is, the intersection of the *Taf* and *Wysg*. The Welsh do not understand the meaning, but the Irish have no word for water but *vi c*; and as the words *Coom*, *Dor*, *Stour*, *Dove*, *Avon*, which are used in England, are the Welsh *Cwm*, a hollow or small rivulet, *dwr*, water, *ystwr*, a noise, *Dyfi*, the name of a river, and *afon*, a river—thereby proving that the Welsh nation formerly occupied those parts; so the words *Wysg*, *Llough*, *Cinwy*, *Ban*, *Drym*, *Llechlia*, and many others, shew that the Irish were the early inhabitants of Wales, because the meaning of these words, respectively, is water, a lake, principal river, high mountain, back, a grayish stone. Who can tell why a sheep-fold is called *curlan*, as it is in Welsh, unless he knows that the Irish call a sheep *kaor*? or why milch cows are, in Welsh, called *gwartheg blithion*, except he understands that the Irish word *blithnin* is synonymous with the Welsh *godro*, to milk †

No one can perfectly understand the Welsh language, without a knowledge of the Irish. Who could comprehend the meaning of *Traeth saith* in Cardiganshire, unless he was acquainted with the Irish? *Eithon* is the name of a river in Radnorshire: the Irish word is *Aith-afon*, that is, a wild running river.

It would be a work equal to the compiling of a small dictionary, to mention *all* the words in the Welsh and Irish

\* *Thamesis*. The words Ask, Esk, Ax, Ex, (*the names of many rivers in England*,) mean the same thing.

† *Vide Luid. Præf. ad Archæol.*

languages, that have the same sound and signification. Let the following examples suffice :

WELSH.	IRISH.	ENGLISH.
Afu	Aef	Liver
Aithin	Attin	Furze
Aful	Aful	Apple
Anadl	Anal	Breath
Amser	Amsir	Time
Ardderchog	Oirddeirch	Excellent
Asen	Asna	A rib
Aur	Or	Gold
Bara	Aran	Bread
Bastard	Bastardd	Bastard
Blwyddyn	Bliawyn	A year
Bloneg	Blonig	Hogs' fat
Byddar	Boddar	Deaf
Bord	Bordh	Table
Bru	Bru	Womb
Bon Coes	Bon Cosh	
Benyw hen	Bun hean	An old woman
Bran	Bran	A crow
Brammu	Brammo	To break wind
Byw	Peo	To live
Bywyd	Biad	Life
Bwa	Boha	Row
Bwth	Both	Roth
Cach	Cac	Cabin, Hut
Cerig	Carrig	Stones
Ceraint	Caraid	Relatives
Celyn	Culin	Holly-wood
Cerbyd	Ca bod	Chariot
Ci-hir	Cu-her	
Cenedl	Cinel	Generation
Cidwm	Cidwm	A voracious beast
Cil-drws	Cul dorus	Back of the door
Claf	Claf	Sick
Cleddyf	Cloiddef	A sword
Cogel	Coigel	A distaff
Cnau	Cnu	A nut
Crybach	Crabach	A hay hook

WELSH.	IRISH.	ENGLISH.
Croen	Croian	Skin
Crib	Criban	A comb
Crogi	Crochu	To hang
Crwth	Crwith	A violin
Cwyr	Coir	Wax
Cwyno	Cwynif	To complain
Cyffion	Cleiffion	Stocks
Dall	Dall	blind
Dalen	Dailen	Leaf
Deri	Dair	Oak trees
Dlyed	D iz	Debt
Dof	Taf	Tame
Dyn	Duin	A man
Drwg	Droch	Bad, Wicked
Du	Du	Black
Draenog	Graenog	Hedge-hog
Dwrn	Dorn	Fist
Dwfn	Dofuin	Deep
Edn	Ean	Wings
Eiddiorwg	Eiddiau	Ivy
Eog	Eo	Smilet
Eingion	Inneon	Anvil
Esgyd	Esgaid	Shoe
Ffroen	Ffron	Nostril
Gardd	Garda	Garden
Gafail dan	Gafal-tien	Tongs
Gafar	Gafar	A goat
Garfan	Gairman	Beam
Glas	Glas	Blue
Glyn	Glen	A vale
Glu-dost	Gluin dos	Sore knee
Glyni	Glenu	To stick
Gloyn	Gloin	A burning coal
Gwallt glan	Follt glan	Fair or clean hair
Gogles	Giglif	To tickle
Gwer	Geir	Tallow
Gwydd	Gedd	Loom
Gweddi	Gwyddif	A prayer
Gwyddelaeg	Goiddelg	Irish
Isel	Iseal	Low
Llaw-ddehen	Llaw-deha	Right hand

## WELSH.

## IRISH.

## ENGLISH.

Lleder	Llethir	Leather
Llefair	Llafairt	To speak
Lliain	Llian	Linen
Llo	Llo	A calf
Llosgi	Lloisci	To burn
Llys	Llis	A court
Llydan	Llethan	Broad
Lludw	Lluoth	Ashes
Llysian	Llyssan	Herbs
Llong	Llong	A ship
Llygod	Llychod.	Mice
Llyfr	Lleafir	A book
Mawr	Mor	Large, great
Maer	Maor	Mayor
Mab-glan	Mac-glann	A fine son
Mantach	Mantach	Toothless
Madyn	Madah	Epithet for a fox
Mall	Mill	Soft, half-boiled
Marw fy nau fab	Marf noddia macsa	My two sons dead
Marwnad	Marnad	Death-cry
Marchog	Marcach	A knight
Maidd	Meadd	Whey, Curds
Man	Mean	Small, Fine
Mel	Mel	Honey
Mes	Mes	Acorn
Memrwn	Memruin	Remembrancer
Melin	Muilen	A mill
Mollt	Mollt	A wether
Moch	Moc	Hogs
Mor	Muir	Sea
Mysg	Mesg	Amongst
Mud	Muit	Dumb
Mynydd	Monydd	Mountain
Nain	Nain	Grandmother
Nef	Nef	Heaven
Nerth	Nert	Strength
Niwl	Neul	Mist
Neidr	Nathair	Snake, Adder
Dynan newydd eni	Denou naoidd eni	A new-born male child
O buan	O Ban	O, quick



## WELSH.

## IRISH.

## ENGLISH.

Pwll  
Pobl  
Rhanu  
Rhawn  
Rhin  
Rhi  
Rhef  
Rhudd  
Sal  
Saer  
Sgubor  
Sgefain  
Sgian  
Sgubell  
Sibwl  
Sopen  
Spleddach  
Sgolpen  
Swch  
Stol  
Tasg  
Tarw  
Tid  
Tes  
Tew  
Toes  
Torog  
Tonn  
Trais  
Trwm  
Truan  
Troed  
Tri-gwr  
Ty  
Tylau  
Twlc  
Twrch  
Wayn  
Wy

Poll  
Pobliach  
Rhannan  
Roin  
Run  
Ri  
Rheif  
Ruaid  
Sal  
Saor  
Sgibod  
Sgeafain  
Sgian  
Sguab  
Siobal  
Soipin  
Spleddach  
Sgolb  
Soc  
Sdol  
Tasga  
Tarw  
Ted  
Tes  
Tiw  
Taos  
Torroch  
Tonn  
Treis  
Trom  
Truhan  
Troid  
Tri-wr  
Te  
Tylah  
Tolch  
Tore  
Wain  
Hwi

Mud hole  
People  
To divide  
Coarse, long hair  
Virtue  
Specific number  
A bundle  
Ruddy  
Sick  
Carpenter  
Barn  
Lungs  
A slicer  
Besom  
Young onions  
A bundle  
Fragments  
  
Snout  
A stool  
Task  
A bull  
A chain  
Hot weather  
Thick  
Dough  
With young  
A wave  
Ravishment  
Heavy  
Wretched  
Foot  
Three men  
A house  
A hill  
A cot, A sty  
Male hog, A mole  
Sheath  
Egg

Notwithstanding this great similarity of language, the Welsh and Irish cannot understand each other; and for this various reasons may be assigned. 1st, They have been for so many centuries separate and distinct people, and have had but little communication or dealings together. Intercourse gives a new feature to every thing, especially to languages; and, not to mention distant nations, the Welsh who emigrated to Brittany, with CONAN, lord of Meiriadoe, A.D. 383, although they speak the Welsh language to this day, cannot be understood without difficulty by the natives of this country, until they have spent a considerable time amongst them. 2d, The Irish retain many original words which we have lost; and we, again, have many which with them are obsolete. We daily see the great difference between the words used in the North, and those used in the South, of Wales; and yet no one will presume to say it is not the Welsh language which is spoken in both sections of the country. In South Wales, there are but few parishes which have not some variations peculiar to themselves, not only in the pronunciation of certain words, but also in their signification. Another cause (and a great one too) is the following: Some hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, in the time of GWRGANT FARFDRWCH, king of Britain, an immense multitude of Spaniards, being driven by famine from their homes, put out to sea, in search of a residence and subsistence.

After suffering many hardships and privations on their dangerous voyage, they landed on this island, where they made known their distressed condition to the king, in terms of sorrow and obedience, imploring him to allow them a small portion of country to settle upon; assuring him that they were a peaceable people—that they had been driven from Spain by famine, and that, if he would take them under his protection, although they had nothing to offer in return but their prayers, the blessing of God would rest upon him and those whom he governed; and promising, in addition, to be faithful subjects to the crown of Britain. Upon hearing this narration, the king compassionated them, and gave them permission to settle in Ireland, that country being sufficiently extensive, and but thinly populated at that time.\*

\* *Mr. Edward Lloyd says this account is strictly true. Vide Galf. lib. 3, c. 12.*

For a length of time, the Irish and the new settlers continued separate, each nation using its own language, and following its own customs; but, in the course of years, they intermarried, and became one people. From this period, the languages were gradually amalgamated, and formed together that which is still spoken in Ireland. This is the reason why so many foreign words, introduced by the *Skuits*, (for so the emigrants from Spain were called,) are intermixed with the Irish. Where their language agrees with our's, it is certainly genuine Welsh; but the words which differ from our's have either become obsolete amongst us, or are words which the Irish derived from the *Skuits*.

Here, then, is one foreign nation which mixed with a tribe of the ancient Britons; and it was not long before a similar occurrence took place with our ancestors, as I am about to shew.

It is not known at what time, after this island was in the sole possession of the Welsh, Brutus, from Troy, landed here. Be that as it may, it is certain that, being able to read and write, and being well versed in many of the sciences, he was, shortly after his arrival, unanimously appointed Chief of the old inhabitants. He gave them instructions (for at that period they were ignorant and illiterate) on many subjects, moral and political: he taught them to plant, to build, and to till the ground, and, especially, to read and write—arts with which but few nations in the world were then acquainted, and which the Welsh have never since entirely lost. It is said that Brutus and his followers landed in Britain about a thousand years before Christ.

The language of these men was Greek, and doubtless it was from them that we received many of the Greek words which are still intermixed with our language; because Brutus and his companions associated with the Welsh, in the same manner as MADOG AP OWEN GWYNEDD did with the American Indians. Madog, in the year of our Lord 1170, (when his countrymen were contending amongst themselves, on account of their inheritances in Wales,) took ship,\* and sailed towards the West, passing Ireland, until he came to

\* *Powell's Chronicle*, p. 227, and *Herb. Travels*, p. 219.

that extensive continent now called *America*. Here he left some of his men to keep possession of the country, and returned home to Wales. On his arrival, he made known to his countrymen what a fruitful and excellent land he had discovered, and how strongly it contrasted with the barren, mountainous country for which they were contending and murdering each other. By way of inducing them to emigrate, he promised that, if they would accompany him, they should have a rich, fertile country for their inheritance, where there would be no scarcity of bread, and where they should lack nothing that would conduce to their happiness and prosperity.

This recital had so great an effect upon his auditors, that a great multitude of men and women immediately declared their willingness to accompany him—particularly of those who were weary of contention, and desirous of leading a quiet and peaceful life. After a voyage of eight months and ten days, they disembarked at the same place where Madog first landed. While that age lasted, they remained together, having but one language, one religion, and one law; but, in process of time, (after the lapse of a few generations,) they began to intermarry with the native tribes, and became assimilated with them in their customs, manners, and religion.

Now, there is the greatest certainty that the Welsh were the first of all the Europeans who discovered a passage to America; for, not only do the chronicles of former ages bear witness to the fact, but (what I consider much stronger evidence) there are many Welsh words still used in that section of country where Madog and his companions originally settled: *e. g.*, *Pingwyn* is the name of a bird with a white head, as the word signifies; *Coch-y-dwr* is a word applied to a water-fowl of a red color; *Corrersso* is the name of the shore where Madog first landed; and one of their rivers is called *Gwenddwr*, which means white water. And, in addition to this, the grave of Madog ap Owen has been found there, with a stone bearing an epitaph to this effect:

MADOG lies here, descended from the blood  
Of Owen Gwynedd. Long upon the sea,  
I rather chose to brave the ocean's flood,  
Than to own lands in their immensity.

To return to Brutus: He and his followers intermixed with the Welsh, and became a part of the same people. They were henceforth called Britons, in honor of him who had instructed them in many branches of useful knowledge; and, because Brutus was a Greek, (as beforementioned,) they made use of Grecian characters in their writings; and this, we are certain, was done long before the birth of Christ. Cæsar relates of the Druids,\* that "they taught the people to recite extempore an immense number of songs and other poetical writings; and that some spent twenty years in learning these pieces, before they were considered competent teachers of others. These productions were held so sacred, that no one dared to write them on paper; but all other compositions they were allowed to transcribe in Greek letters."†

Hence, it is evident that the Britons could read and write before either the Saxons or the Romans came amongst them; for the learned author just mentioned flourished fifty years before Christ was born; and the Greek letters they used were the same that may be seen on stones in many parts of Wales, to this day.

\* "The religion of the Britons was one of the most considerable parts of their government; and the Druids, who were the guardians of it, possessed great authority among them. No species of superstition was ever more terrible than their's: besides the severe penalties which they were permitted to inflict in this world, they inculcated the eternal transmigration of souls, and thus extended their authority as far as the fears of their votaries. They sacrificed human victims, which they burned in large wicker idols, made so capacious as to contain a multitude of persons at once, who were thus consumed together. To these rites, tending to impress ignorance with awe, they added the austerity of their manners, and the simplicity of their lives. They lived in woods, caves, and hollow trees: their food was acorns and berries, and their drink water. By these arts, they were not only respected, but almost adored by the people."—*Goldsmith's Hist. of Eng.*

"The spoils of war were often devoted to their divinities; and they punished with the severest tortures those who dared to secrete any part of the consecrated offering. These treasures they kept in woods and forests, secured by no other guard than the terrors of their religion; and this steady conquest over human cupidity may be regarded as more signal than their prompting men to the most extraordinary and most violent efforts."—*Hume's Hist. of Eng.*

† *Cæs. de Bell. Gall., lib. 6, p. 106.*

Not only did the ancient Britons introduce Greek letters in their writings, but the Welsh language still retains many words of Greek derivation, the original words being lost by us, but preserved amongst the Irish. The old Welsh word, *visc*, water, is no longer used by us, but it is retained by the Irish. *Dwfr*, the present Welsh term for water, is a Greek word, received from Brutus. Let another example suffice: the ancient Welsh called the sun *grian*: this word is lost by us, but still used by the Irish. The word *haul*, which in Welsh means the sun, was introduced amongst us by Brutus.

The first attempt to deny the coming of Brutus to this island, was made under the following circumstances: When Jeffrey ap Arthur, lord bishop of St. Asaph, died, an Englishman, whom the Welsh call LITTLE GWILYM, applied to Dafydd ap Owen, prince of North Wales, for the vacant bishoprick, about the year of our Lord 1169; and, because he did not succeed in his application, he returned home full of anger and resentment, using every exertion to vilify and ridicule, not only the memory of the bishop, who was then lying in his grave, but also the character of the whole Welsh nation. Prompted by malicious motives, because he failed to accomplish the object of his wishes, he even went so far as to deny that Brutus ever visited Britain. The book, in which he attempts to prove this, is full of scurrility and falsehood against the Welsh people.

Little Gwilym says, shamelessly, that no one ever spoke of the emigration of Brutus and his followers from Troy to Britain, until Jeffrey ap Arthur concocted the story; but this charge is too devoid of authority, and contrary to the received opinion of the people, to gain any credence whatever. Jeffrey ap Arthur merely translated the Welsh chronicle into the Latin, that the learned in every country might be made acquainted with it; and, long before his time, some of Taliesin's poetry shews what his countrymen then thought of Brutus. Taliesin wrote about A.D. 556.

There is also some information to be gathered from tradition. It is well known that the belief is very general amongst the Welsh, that their forefathers came to this country from Troy. I have already shewn whence this tradition

originated. Indeed, the opinion has become so prevalent, that even the shepherds, as they tend their flocks upon the hills, may be seen sketching upon the ground the shape or picture of Troy, as they imagine.\* A person of reflection may gather something from this: they describe it as being full of turns, according to the signification of its Welsh name, *Caer-droiu*.

There remains now, as far as I am aware, but one question: Why was this island called Britain? Mr. Camden, who was certainly a man of great learning, but opinionated, thinks that foreigners bestowed this appellation upon it, because the natives were accustomed to make spots (*britho*) upon their skin; but there is scarcely an individual to be found, who coincides in this puerile fancy. Mr. Humphrey Lloyd, another intelligent Welshman, who wrote before Camden, is of opinion that the meaning of the word Britain (*Brydain*) is *Pryd-cain*, and that the inhabitants so named it on account of its beauty and fertility. This also sounds harshly. But here lies the misfortune: even though we should arrive at the correct meaning of the word, there are so many different opinions upon the subject, that we could neither be certain of it ourselves, nor change the settled belief of others. For my part, I should think that, if it was not named after Brutus, its ancient appellation was *Pryd-wwen*, which will apply much more readily to a beautiful country than *Pryd-cain*, the name which the ancient Britons gave to Arthur's shield.

There is a great difference of opinion amongst the learned, as to what country was alluded to by old writers, under the

\* There are several of these sketches in England, which are denominated "*The Walls of Troy*." There is one, in particular, on the banks of the river Humber, six or seven miles from Hull, in Yorkshire; to which, in fine weather, the young people of the surrounding country frequently resort, and vie with each other in tracing its mysterious windings. It has puzzled many thousands, and, amongst the rest, the writer of this, who was never able, though he made the attempt more than a hundred times, to unravel its intricacies. The lines are marked by a plough, about three inches deep, and are kept free from dirt or obstructions of any kind, by a person employed for the purpose. It is not to be supposed, however, from this, that the ENGLISH entertain the belief that *they* sprang from Brutus, the Greek.—*Pub's*.

name of *Thule*; but, if they had understood the Welsh language, there would have been no occasion for dispute. In reading an old manuscript, I came to the words *Tylen Iscoed*, that is, (*Tylen'r Iwerddon*, the hills of Ireland. All the distant writers call Ireland *Scotia*,\* from the Welsh word *Iscoed*; and, as all agree that *Thule* is an island near Britain, towards the west,† what country can it be but the island of Ireland? There is not much difference between the Welsh word *Tylen* and the Latin word *Thule*.

The ancients were accustomed to praise Ireland very highly, calling it *Paradise*, *The perfection of beauty*, *The blessed country*, *The delight of the world*. One cause of these encomiums, doubtless, was the belief that no venomous animal could exist in the country—an opinion which has been, and still is, very prevalent in the world.

\* *Uss. Primord* 725-734. † *Ultima Thule*.



CHAPTER II.—*The War with the Romans, who deprived the Britons unjustly of their rights.*

THE island of Britain formerly paid tribute to the court of Rome, for more than four hundred years. At that period, the leading Welshmen were as conversant with the Latin language as the modern gentry are with the English.

I do not think the Pope of Rome had the right to send his officers to collect this annual tax; but the Emperors of the Imperial City, who, long before the coming of the English into this island, had extended their conquests into Asia, Africa, and the interior of Europe, and even into Britain.

But what had an Emperor or the Pope to do with this country? What right had either to exercise authority here? You shall hear. The title of the first was the edge of his sword; for whatever country he and his warriors could subdue, the force of their arms was considered a sufficient claim to its possession. As to the right of the Pope to levy this tribute money, it is even less just than that of the Emperors; for it is no better than robbery to take advantage of the ignorance and credulity of the people, by presuming to exercise authority, and professing to be the Head of the Church—an assumption of power with which Jesus Christ never invested him? When the Church of Rome was in its purity, ere it degenerated and became defiled with superstition, as it now is, there was no distinction between the Bishop of Rome and other bishops: they all stood on terms of equality.

The first of the Romans who came to this island was JULIUS CÆSAR. This was about fifty years before Christ. He was a man of great courage—a warrior from his youth, and was ambitious, like Alexander the Great, to subdue the whole world, that his name might “live in future story.”

The first to enter the ensanguined field,  
The last to play the coward, or to yield.

Before he ventured to invade our country, he sent a letter to king Caswallon,\* couched in the following words:†

“Inasmuch as all the West have submitted to my authority, and acknowledged the supremacy of the Roman Senate,‡ either through love or through fear; therefore, be it known to thee, Caswallon, and to thy subjects who are surrounded by the sea, and have not yielded to the power of Rome, that you must obey me and the Roman Senate; for this is just and right.

“To warn you, we, the Roman Senate, send you this message, to declare unto you that we will send against you the strength of our mighty army, unless you immediately promise to pay an annual tribute to our court, to be prepared at all times, with the whole of your forces, to fight at our command against our enemies, and to send hostages to Rome for the fulfilment of these engagements. If you comply with these requisitions, you need have no fear of being molested: if you disregard them, you may prepare for the speedy execution of our threats.”

When Caswallon had read this letter, he called together his counsellors and the chiefs of the people, that they might learn the situation in which they were placed, and adopt prompt and efficient measures to meet, as became them, the portentous storm which was suspended, as it were, like a drawn dagger, above their heads. In despite of all the threats of Cæsar and the Senate, they unanimously agreed upon returning the following reply:

“Inasmuch as thou, Cæsar, hast written to me, saying that the kingdoms of the West have acknowledged thy power, and become tributary to Rome; be it known to thee, that the island of Britain belongs to me and my people, and, although the gods have enabled thee to conquer according to thy will, thou shalt not have our country, for we are a free

\* Cassibelaunus, according to Goldsmith and Hume.—*Pub's*.

† *MS. vet.*

‡ *The Roman Senate was similar to the British Parliament.*

people, and owe thee and the Roman Senate neither tribute, nor forces, nor hostages. Thou mayst choose, therefore, either to retract thy threats, or to go to war. We are more ready to fight than to sue for peace, and are willing to hazard our lives in defence of our country. We are not to be intimidated by thy vain boasting. Act thy pleasure, but prepare for the consequences."

When Julius Cæsar read this, and saw the steadfast determination of the Britons to resist his advances, he was filled with wrath, and said to his supreme counsellors, "You perceive how harshly and unkindly they have answered me: perhaps we can subdue some of their courage." His officers replied, "Wilt thou, O Cæsar, be discouraged by the idle words of these barbarians? We know thou wilt not. Behold, we are ready to fight at thy pleasure, whilst a drop of blood remains in our bodies." Upon this, he took courage, collected his men together,—twenty-five thousand footmen and four thousand five hundred horsemen—and, embarking them in eighty small vessels, sailed towards Britain.

The Britons were aware of his intention to invade them. It was no time to be idle, or backward in adopting measures for defence. Accordingly, sentinels were stationed in every seaport, lest the enemy should fall upon them unawares. As soon as the Roman fleet appeared in sight, information was dispatched to the king, who thereupon collected his forces, and hastened with a large army to a seaport in Kent,\* where he found the enemy already within shooting distance. The Britons, at this time, had neither coat of mail, buckler, shield, helmet, nor any other implement of war, to defend them from the darts and spears of their hostile invaders; whilst the Romans had helmets of brass upon their heads, shields in their hands, and steel coats of mail to protect their bodies: yet, with all these advantages,† they had no reason to boast. Some of the brave and intrepid Britons ascended the rocks, some went down to the shore, others waded into the sea—all determined upon giving the enemy as warm a

\* On the coast of Dover.—*Goldsmith*.

† *Apud quos (Britannos) nulla loricarum galearumve tegmina. Tac. Annal. l. 12, p. 142.*

reception as possible. Their darts were discharged in showers, and committed such fearful execution that the blood of the slain streamed over the sides of their ships into the sea.

The Roman general was not prepared for such a reception as this; and, brave as he was, he was greatly disappointed and mortified at the discouragement which was spreading amongst his troops—some of them loading him with curses for enticing them from their homes, to be thus unceremoniously slaughtered—some groaning in the agonies of death, whilst around them were strewed the lifeless bodies of their companions, weltering in their blood. Once, indeed, he almost determined to return; but this, he thought, would be an eternal reproach amongst his countrymen. He therefore again endeavored to inspire his men with courage, by representing the dishonor which would be attached to them, if they returned to Rome without accomplishing the object of their expedition; and expressing his determination to land, in spite of all opposition. His address had the desired effect: the attack was renewed, and the Romans, being greatly enraged, discharged their arrows like hailstones upon the Britons. So great a number was killed on both sides, in this engagement, that the waves of the sea were crimsoned with the blood of the slain; whilst the bodies of the wounded and the dead lay scattered in heaps upon the shore. If it was any advantage to Cæsar to set his feet upon the British island, he certainly obtained it; but, had not he and his men made a speedy retreat to their ships, they would have been utterly destroyed by the exasperated natives. This occurred about fifty-two years before Christ.

I am aware that Cæsar himself says that he committed great havoc in Britain; but where is the evidence to confirm his assertion? We can scarcely credit any person who thus sings his own praise; especially when his own biographers (his countrymen too) testify to the contrary.\* One of the poets of that age thus alludes to this event:

Territa quæsitilis ostendit terga Britannis. LUCAN.

\* *Quamquam prospera pugna terruerit incolas, ac littore potitus sit potest videri ostendisse posteris non tradidisse.*  
*It. Agr. p. 638.*

CÆSAR, with all his boasted power,  
 With all the countries he had won,  
 Could not withstand the steady shower  
 Of darts, which darkened the sun ;  
 But with his fleet escaped to sea,  
 And Britons claimed the victory.

Great was the rejoicing of the Britons, when they had put to flight such a formidable army, who styled themselves the conquerors of the world ; and king Caswallon ordered proclamation to be made throughout the kingdom, commanding every one to sacrifice to the gods. He also sent letters to his princes, noblemen, counsellors, and rulers, inviting them to London, to partake of a splendid and sumptuous feast. It is said that there were killed, on that occasion, twenty thousand cattle, fifty thousand sheep, and birds innumerable.\* This was one of the three honorable feasts of the British island, spoken of by NANMOR, the poet.

This prosperity was of short continuance. The sun, which had burst forth upon them with such unwonted splendor, was soon overshadowed by a heavy and portentous cloud. We can form no certainty, from the beauty of the morning, that the day will be lovely and serene. The sun may rise without a cloud to obscure its brightness, and, ere its daily circuit "half is run," storms and tempests may deface the universal heavens. Such is the instability and inconstancy of worldly honors and human hopes ! How often do we witness terrific revolutions, and the depopulation of empires, arising from apparently trifling causes—from the restless ambition or malicious arts of a single individual ! "An angry man," says Solomon, "stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression." *Prov. xxix. 22.* The application of this passage will be found in the following narrative.

Shortly after the feast before mentioned, two young princes of royal blood went to amuse themselves by wrestling, leaping, pitching quoits, fencing, &c. The name of one was HIRGLAS, a nephew of king Caswallon ; the other was CYHELYN, a nephew of Afarwy, prince of London, who was the king's uncle. At the termination of their sport, instead

\* *King's History, 23, MS.*

of being merry, they began to dispute, and from unkind words proceeded to blows, and eventually to drawn swords, when Cyhelyn overpowered and killed his antagonist. Afarwy, however, asserted that Hircglas had fallen on his own sword; and, lest his nephew should be charged with the murder, and suffer the punishment due to the offence, (as Caswallon had threatened,) he sent a letter to Cæsar, inviting him to return to Britain, expressing his sorrow for having formerly opposed him, and promising him all the assistance in his power to enable him to overcome Caswallon, and to bring the country into subjection to the court of Rome.\*

Well knowing that Cæsar was an artful general, and that his own promises would not be relied upon unless seconded by some less doubtful movement, the traitor Afarwy sent his son with thirty-two knights to carry his letter, and to be hostages for the fulfilment of his word. This revived the heart of Cæsar: the intelligence and the invitation were alike agreeable to his feelings; yet, because he met with so rough a reception, on his first visit, that he was obliged to fly and make his escape, he came the second time full of wrath and with great confidence. *Then*, he had no more than eighty boats to transport his army to Britain: *now*, he had eight hundred, and the number of his soldiers was thirty-three thousand three hundred and thirty footmen, and as many horsemen, making in all sixty-six thousand six hundred and sixty†—nearly one hundred thousand armed men, the greater part of them warriors from their youth. Who could withstand such a prodigious army?

It is not known what number of soldiers the traitor Afarwy had at his command, to assist the Romans; and one domestic traitor (may the curse of his mother follow every such character for ever!) is more to be dreaded than a hundred open and avowed enemies; for he is acquainted with every fortification, and all other secrets, by a knowledge of which

\* We have omitted this letter, although it is given in the original. It is merely a repetition of that part of the history relative to Cyhelyn and Hircglas, and its insertion was therefore considered unnecessary.—*Pub's*.

† *Cum legionibus v. et pari numero equitum. Cæs. lib. 5 p. 77.*

the invader can obtain any advantage. Notwithstanding all the flattering prospects under which he approached this island, Cæsar had little occasion to boast of the success of his expedition ; nor did he receive much commendation from his countrymen at Rome. The Britons had fastened bars of iron with sharp and horrible spikes in the river Thames, one or two feet below the surface ; and, when Cæsar's ships came across them, the whole of the troops were thrown into the utmost confusion, and the most terrible shrieks and wailings arose from the drowning soldiers. During this dreadful scene, the Britons were safe on shore, rejoicing at the success of their scheme. It is easy to judge from this, that they were better skilled in the art of war than some ancient writers have professed to believe.

Julius Cæsar, however, succeeded in landing with his army ; and, if we may believe what he says himself, he met with no opposition : his ships, in consequence of the injury received from the iron spikes, sank to the bottom of the Thames. The inhabitants, he says, had fled to the woods and recesses, being terrified at the sight of such a formidable array of ships. It is certain, however, that they shortly made their reappearance, not to bow to Cæsar, or to bend the knee before him, but to shoot their envenomed arrows to his heart. When the Romans shouted for battle, the Britons made a feint to retreat, and, when pursued, suddenly turned back upon the enemy, and made no inconsiderable slaughter amongst them ; although Cæsar says that his army was ultimately victorious.

There was one peculiarity in the manner of fighting practised by the Britons, which deserves notice. They were in the habit of driving chariots,\* having iron hooks placed under

\* They used chariots in battle, which, with short scythes fastened to the ends of the axle-trees, inflicted terrible wounds, spreading terror and devastation wherever they drove. Nor, while the chariots were thus destroying, were the warriors who conducted them unemployed : these darted their javelins against the enemy, ran along the beam, leaped on the ground, resumed their seat, stopped or turned their horses at full speed, and sometimes cunningly retreated, to draw the enemy into confusion.—*Goldsmith's Hist. Eng.*

Their forces consisted chiefly of foot, and yet they could bring a considerable number of horse into the field upon great occasions. *Id.*

them, through the ranks of the enemy ; and it is said that Caswallon had five thousand of these in the above battle. The Romans had never before seen such a mode of warfare ; and certainly it was a very cruel invention : but, in war, nothing is studied but destruction. Notwithstanding the bravery of the Roman soldiers, it is said that their countenances changed color as soon as they heard the noise of the chariots.

Julius Cæsar made but a short stay in Britain at this time, and that for a good reason : the climate was too hot for him. He acknowledges that he and his army could enjoy neither ease nor rest. Whenever any party of them set out on a foraging expedition, the Britons would rush upon them and destroy them ; and fortunate indeed was that man who could, by escaping, convey the intelligence to their commander. And were not the Britons justified in thus cutting off the invaders and despoilers of their country ? They were only acting in defence of their own possessions.

The Roman general at length returned to Rome, and the Britons were left in undisturbed possession of their country for nearly a hundred years.

AUGUSTUS CÆSAR (in whose reign Jesus Christ was born) made an attempt to land on this island, and one of the great poets of that age, thus alludes to his expedition, and prays for its success :

HEAVEN guard Augustus and his martial train  
From danger, as they plough the angry main ;  
And, when on Britain's sea-girt shore they stand,  
May greetings welcome them on every hand !

*Horat. lib. 1, Od. 35.*

But he did little more than resolve and threaten.\* In about thirty years afterwards, CALIGULA, who was a weak but blood-thirsty man, determined upon visiting this island. He accordingly raised a large army, and made every preparation for the expedition ; but, after sailing some distance, and

\* He was, according to Goldsmith, diverted from his design by an unexpected revolt of the Pannonians.



having lost sight of France, his courage forsook him ; and, instead of proceeding to Britain, to add the laurels of conquest to his name, he returned to France, where he amused himself by gathering shells on the sea-shore\*—an employment much better suited to his capacity than heading an army against the Britons, for it required no exertion, and was attended with no danger.

Thus far the Britons had defended their country, and maintained their liberty free from the oppression of the Romans ; and, if they had been peaceable amongst themselves, and united in the common cause, they might have continued successfully to oppose their invaders. It must be confessed, however, that they were a quarrelsome and contentious people. So far from joining in one solid body to oppose the Romans, they were divided into numerous petty bands, each jealous of the other, and more disposed to contest each other's rights than, by their combined efforts, to arrest the progress of the common enemy. Universal peace was seldom, if ever, enjoyed amongst them : the strong oppressed the weak, and a spirit of vindictiveness was manifest in all the movements of their respective leaders. It is acknowledged by the Romans themselves, (who will not be suspected in this case of flattery.) that, had it not been for the contentions and divisions which were continually weakening the force of the Britons, they never would have been able to conquer them : indeed, they would then have been invincible. The situation of the country, surrounded as it is with nature's impregnable ramparts, would have secured them from outward attacks, had peace and unity dwelt within their own borders. It is true, they had but one king—but the title was the only semblance of authority he possessed ; for, as we have already said, every petty band had its own leader, who acted as he thought fit, without any reference to the general interests of the country.

This spirit of vindictiveness was the more inexcusable, inasmuch as their religious instructors, the Druids, were continually haranguing them, and laying before them the dangers

\* *Tacit. Annal. lib. 12, D. 243.*

to which they were exposing themselves, and the calamities which would inevitably result from the course they were pursuing. Among others, a venerable and learned Druid, named Cyntwrch, addressed them. He began by relating the fable of the old man, his twelve sons, and the bundle of sticks;\* drew therefrom a comparison of their situation, and concluded as follows: "O! my countrymen, the chiefs and leaders of the people, this is a true representation of your condition: if you live peaceably together, all the assaults of the Romans cannot harm you. You remember the defeat of Julius Cæsar, whom the united bravery of your fathers put to flight: learn wisdom from their example—follow in the path which their valor and patriotism have consecrated, and you cannot fail to overcome all your opponents. But, if you prefer living in such a state of animosity and disunion, rely upon it, you will soon be enslaved by the Romans."†

All that the Druids could say was of no avail: their countrymen turned a deaf ear to their entreaties, and "would none of their counsel." They continued their accustomed practices, and pursued, if possible, with increased eagerness, their turbulent and contentious career of murder and revenge.

In the midst of the confusion which such a state of affairs naturally excited, a nobleman named Meuric was robbed of his wealth, and deprived of his power and authority—his houses were burnt, his lands laid waste, his vassals murdered, and himself driven through the country, vainly seeking a place of refuge and concealment. At length, in a violent fit of anger, he crossed the sea, with the intention of inviting CLAUDIUS CÆSAR to come over and subdue Britain. This was about A.D. 44, nearly a hundred years from the first invasion of this country by the Romans.

\* This fable is so familiar, and has been so repeatedly published, that we have omitted it entirely. The reader, if he compares this translation with the original, will perceive that many of the "familiar comparisons," spoken of in the author's preface, are also omitted, being, in our opinion, unsuited to the character of the work. We know not how they sound in Welsh, but to our ears they seem harsh and inappropriate.—*Pub's.*

† *MS. rect.*

Claudius Cæsar, upon this, called together his principal advisers, to consult with them as to the propriety of making war upon the Britons. His counsellors were in favor of the measure, and observed that, although Julius Cæsar was unsuccessful in his expedition, there was no doubt that they could be conquered; for their leaders were at variance with each other, and could not be brought together to oppose them. Besides, Meuric was a friend of their's, and could render them great assistance. They therefore were in favor of the war, and added, by way of an incitement to the emperor, that, unless he sent an army to Britain, they would be considered cowards—an epithet unbecoming the dignity of the Roman people.

Claudius took the advice of his counsellors, and ordered Plaucius, the commander-in-chief, to proceed with his army to Britain; directing him, in case of an emergency, to send word to Rome, when he would be prepared to come with a reinforcement to his assistance.

When Plaucius, after great difficulty, had sailed as far as the British Channel, he found it no easy matter to persuade his men to proceed any further. The recollection of the valor formerly displayed by the Britons arose to their minds, and they felt little inclination to try the skill and bravery of the present race. At length, however, they consented, and continued their course until they came within sight of land, when a storm suddenly arose, and they were driven back to the coast of France. The Britons had been apprised of the expedition of the Romans, and had made preparations to receive them; but, thinking that their fleet had been destroyed during the storm, they incautiously disbanded their forces; and, while the army was thus scattered, Plaucius landed his men.\* In this unprepared condition, with the effects of the recent contentions still rankling in their bosoms, the Britons at first fell an easy prey to their disciplined invaders. They, however, recovered their self-possession, came to terms of agreement amongst themselves, and collected together in a body under CYNFELYN, their king, with a full determination to conquer or die in defence of their common country. They soon avenged upon the Romans the blood of their fallen

\* *Dio. Cas. p. 506.*

countrymen, and, notwithstanding the skill of Plaucius, his talents as a general, and his ardent desire to be victorious, in order to gain the approbation of his master, he was compelled to send to Rome for assistance,\* and Claudius himself came over with the entire strength of his army.

When the messengers who were dispatched for reinforcements related the circumstances of the recent engagements, and spoke of the valor displayed by the Britons, the emperor was considerably perplexed. He was anxious that the war should be continued, but would gladly have exempted himself from participating personally in its arduous duties. After much reflection, it occurred to him that the Roman army had, on certain occasions formed a line of elephants in battle array, with signal success; and he determined to try the experiment in Britain. It was successful; for no sooner were they let loose, than the war-horses of the Britons took fright, their army was thrown into confusion, and totally defeated.

After this signal discomfiture, Cynfelyn submitted to pay an annual tribute to Rome; and the coin which was then issued (some of which is still extant) bore this inscription, in legible characters, "*Cynfelyn's Task.*" Sixteen days after this treaty was made, Claudius returned to Rome, where he was received with acclamations. In commemoration of the stratagem by which this victory was obtained, a coin was struck at Rome, with the likeness of Claudius Cæsar on one side, and the figure of an elephant on the other.

As yet, but a small portion of the Britons had submitted to pay tribute to Rome—those who occupied the neighborhood of London, and were the immediate subjects of Cynfelyn; for, when the Romans determined upon extending their authority towards the West, they were opposed by CARACTACUS, a brave and valiant man, of whom even *they* were lavish of their praise, not only for his skill and undaunted courage in battle, but for his moderation, his generosity, and forbearance in the hour of victory. He was neither unduly elated when successful, nor depressed when the chances of war

\* *Dio. Cas. loc. cit.*

were against him. He withstood the entire strength of the Romans for nine years, and would have continued his opposition other nine, but for the treachery of one of his countrywomen, named *Curtis fin-ddu*,\* who betrayed him into their hands. During these nine years, he fought thirty battles, and, although occasionally wounded, always retired from the field with honor and success. In order to encourage the hearts of his followers, he was accustomed to address them in the following manner: "Britons, be strong and courageous. Our cause is good: we are fighting in self-defence, to preserve our country, our property, and our liberty from the ravages of the oppressor. Remember the valor and the bravery of your fathers, who put to flight the army of Julius Cæsar: remember Caswallon, and Tudar-bengnoch, and Gorronwy-gethyn, and Rhydderch, and Madoc-benfras."†

After his betrayal, he was carried in chains to Rome, where great rejoicing was manifested at the capture of a man who, for so many years, had successfully opposed the strength of the empire.

The city was never so full of strangers as at this time. It seemed as if the whole surrounding country had sent forth its people, to witness the entrance of Caractacus. Not only were there multitudes of the common people, but the nobility and gentry thronged in countless numbers to swell the scene of triumph and gratulation.‡ This took place about A.D. 53.

Notwithstanding all that had happened, the Britons were not disheartened. They continued to oppose the intrusion

\* *Cardismandua*.

† *Vocabatque nomina majorum. Tac. p. 242.*

‡ "While Caractacus was leading through Rome, he appeared no way dejected at the amazing concourse of spectators that were gathered upon this occasion, but, casting his eyes on the splendors that surrounded him, 'Alas, (cried he,) how is it possible that a people possessed of such magnificence at home could envy me an humble cottage in Britain!' The emperor was affected with the British hero's misfortunes, and won by his address. He ordered him to be unchained upon the spot, and set at liberty with the rest of his captives."—*Goldsmith's Hist. of Eng.*

of the Romans, with more fury than ever, determined to avenge the loss of their gallant commander. Their next great leader was ARIFOG. He fought many battles, with various success—sometimes victorious, at other times defeated. And what more could any people have done in defence of their country, than the Britons did? They were as brave and as warlike as any nation in the world; but how was it possible for them to contend longer against the Romans, who were continually pouring in thousands of men, well disciplined and accoutred, to subdue them? We should rather be surprised that they held out so long. Every battle they fought diminished their numbers, and reduced their strength; while their invaders were receiving accessions of both; almost daily. Defeat could not thin their ranks, nor weaken their determination to bring the Britons into entire subjection.

The Romans practised great art in keeping possession of the countries they subdued. They took care to employ all the warriors in foreign service. Titus Vespasian had no less than twenty thousand Britons at the taking of Jerusalem;\* and in their stead this country was inundated with his own countrymen, who secured to themselves every pleasant situation on the island. These wandering intruders were in the habit of tantalizing the natives, ridiculing their misfortunes, calling them opprobrious names, and persecuting them in every possible way. The common people were treated like slaves: they were compelled to labor day and night, to satisfy the caprice of their oppressors. Complaint was worse than useless, for, instead of exciting sympathy, it added to their sufferings. Indeed, they were little better, in the estimation of the Romans, than senseless brutes. Amongst other acts of cruelty and barbarity, they plundered the palace of Prasatagus, king of the Iceni, of every thing that was valuable; and when his queen, Boadicea,† remonstrated with them, they beat her unmercifully, and ravished her daughter before her eyes. Nor was this all: in order to insult and persecute the people still more, they set up an image of the emperor, and all who refused to bow thereto were put to death.

\* *Jos. Antiq. abridged by J. Howel, p. 225.*

† *Or Buddug.*

This was intolerable, and the lords and nobles of the kingdom were indignant. They met together, and, after some consultation, determined to rush suddenly upon their oppressors, and cut them off, without respect to age, sex, rank, or condition. This conspiracy was a daring and frightful one; but, in those days, and under such circumstances, the measure was considered justifiable and proper.

About this time, the Roman army made an incursion into the island of Anglesea. This island was then inhabited by Druids, who preferred having their walks in dark places overshadowed by the branches of the wide-spreading oak, (with which the island abounded,) to offer sacrifices, and to call upon their gods. (See *Ezek.* vi. 13.) This is the meaning of the poet in the following lines:

Goon night, sombre island, begirt by the sea,  
No land 'neath the sun I love better than thee.

*Llywelyn Goch. ap Meuryg.*

The inhabitants of Anglesea, as I before said, were no warriors, but an assembly of religious teachers, who naturally supposed that the sanctity of their profession, and the unobtrusive character of their lives, would have secured them the respect of the Romans; but they were mistaken. The Druids had no weapons of war, and, when the Roman army came upon them, they walked forth, arrayed in apparel of changeable colors, with head-dresses indicative of their office, and long staves in their hands: the young maidens carried burning wax candles, or lamps, and danced as they went along. When the Romans first saw them, they were alarmed; but, recovering from their surprise, they poured a shower of darts upon them, which soon scattered them, and made dreadful destruction amongst them. The place where the Romans landed is called *Maes hir-gad*, (Long-army field,) to this day: the battle was fought near *Porthamel*, between *Pwll y fuwch* and *Llanidan*, and there is a spot not far distant which still bears the name of *Pant yr Ys-graffan*\* (The Ferry Plain.)

The Britons, seeing this slaughter of the Druids, were

\* *Vide Rol. Mon. Antiq. Restor. p. 98.*

more enraged than ever. They thus reasoned amongst themselves: "These blood-thirsty Romans have rushed upon our priests and the inhabitants of Anglesea, who never injured them, and have put them to the sword; and, after all the indignities we have received at their hands, we are still submitting to their insolence and oppression without a murmur. As they have done unto us, even so let us do unto them."

Upon this, the whole country flew to arms, and shewed as little mercy to the Romans as *they* had done to the people of Anglesea. There was nothing to be heard, from one end of the kingdom to the other, but the shouts of the Britons and the groans and lamentations of the Romans. Their temple, with the image of the emperor, was burnt—their priests massacred—the colony of London was consumed, and the inhabitants indiscriminately slaughtered; and, although guards were stationed in the principal towns, they could not arrest the fury of the assailants. Nearly eighty thousand men fell in this frightful rebellion.

When Paulinus,\* the Roman general, heard this, he returned with his army from Anglesea; but they were so terrified on seeing the dead bodies of their friends and countrymen scattered in every direction, that they were almost unable to support their arms. To behold the face of the country covered with the smoke of their burning cities, and, above all, to see the army of the Britons more than four times as numerous as their own, was enough to cause their hearts to "melt within them, and become like water."† Indeed, they would have made no efforts to avenge the blood which had been shed, had not Paulinus, who was a man of great resolution and fearless courage, addressed them to the following effect: "Illustrious Romans, will you be discouraged by the noise and shouting of these barbarians? What is their formidable legion? The greatest part of them are hot-headed women, who would be much better employed at their spinning-wheels. And what are their men, but so many untrained hands, who have no skill in the art of war? Be firm, therefore, O Romans, who are the terror of the world: be valiant, and you shall soon trample the dead

\* *Suetonius Paulinus.*

† *Joshua, vii. 5.*



bodies of these barbarians under your feet." Upon this, BOADICEA, the wife of Prasatagus, (who, although a woman, commanded the army of the Britons,) addressed them as follows :\* " Britons, I do not disdain, although a woman and of royal blood, to take up arms with you in defence of our country, our privileges, and our property against the oppressive hand of the Romans. May God avenge them for the wrong they have done, not only to myself and my family, but to our whole nation ! For my own part, I never will be a slave under their dominion : let others choose for themselves. If you have the hearts and the feelings of men, acquit yourselves as such. I will say no more : my duty shall be performed." The effect of this address was such as might have been expected : the Britons commenced a violent attack upon their opponents ; and so confident were they of victory, that many thousands of them assembled on the tops of the surrounding hills, with the utmost certainty, as they thought, of witnessing the entire destruction of the Romans.

The Romans received the first shower of darts, appalling as it was, with great firmness : there was no confusion or disorder in their ranks ; and, when the Britons became a little more cool, they connected their shields together, to protect themselves, and rushed upon them sword in hand. The swords they carried were double-edged, and those of the Britons had but one edge ; and because of this disadvantage they were soon overcome. Little short of eighty thousand fell on this eventful day—persons of all ranks and ages, for the Romans were so enraged that they spared neither old nor young, men, women, nor children.† Boadicea, who, during the fight, had displayed great intrepidity and presence of mind, in the agonies of sorrow and disappointment at its disastrous result, put an end to her existence by poison. This occurred about A.D. 62.

Soon after this, the dominion of the Romans was extended, although much blood was shed in its accomplishment : they

\* *Tac. Annal. p. 311.*

† *Tac. ubi supra.*

had to contend with the sword for every foot of ground they acquired. An obstinate and bloody battle was fought in Anglesea, and another with the inhabitants of the South, whom the Romans acknowledged to be the most valiant men on the island. About seventeen years afterwards, an engagement took place on the coast of Scotland, in which (according to the Roman account) ten thousand Britons were slain, and only four hundred of their opponents, amongst whom were some of their most eminent men.

Let others say what they please to the contrary, we may take it for granted, that the Romans had more difficulty in effecting the subjection of Britain, than they had experienced in any previous invasions. In other countries, one or two successful engagements were sufficient to establish their authority; but the Britons were made of "sterner stuff"—they would not submit to be captives or slaves, without numerous and continued efforts. They knew the value of liberty, and were determined, as long as it was possible, to maintain it amongst themselves. To be candid, the Romans were heartily sorry that they ever interfered with them—that the ambition of their leaders ever impelled them to the shores of Britain; for, as yet, they had gained no laurels, and acquired no permanent conquest. Finding, therefore, from the character of the Britons, (which, by this time, they had had ample opportunities of ascertaining,) that they could never subdue them by violent measures, they changed their plan of operations, and attempted, by the introduction of luxuries,\* and by flattery and hypocrisy, to attain their object. They built elegant houses, brought silks and other expensive dresses into fashion, gave large feasts, and fol-

\* It is singular that the Romans should adopt the *very same* means for undermining the bravery of the Britons, as that by which they afterwards fell. It has been remarked by historians, that the prime cause of the degeneracy of all those nations which, at various periods, have held undisputed sway over the rest of the world, and are now so reduced in importance as to be remembered only in history, was the introduction of LUXURY. This paved the way for an extravagant indulgence in idle splendor and parade—unnerved the arm of the warrior—produced dissensions, slothfulness, and indolence, and finally prostrated all rational energy and public virtue. Thus fell ALL the ancient kingdoms of the East: thus fell the Republics of Greece and Rome—and thus inevitably *must* fall ALL nations where the indulgence in luxuries is not tempered by moderation.—*Pub's.*

lowed all kinds of vain amusements. They caused their own language to be more generally studied; and it was soon considered by the leading Britons as an indispensable accomplishment.

The Romans would no doubt have been well pleased, if such a dissipated mode of living had been adopted throughout the country; but there were some who looked with suspicion upon this corruption, and, amongst the rest, GWRGAN FARFDRWCH,\* who took occasion to caution his fellow countrymen against the excesses into which they were running, and the dangers to which they were heedlessly exposing themselves. He addressed them as follows: "You, princes and leaders of the people, listen to a fable. A lion, one fine morning in summer, saw a goat browsing on the top of a high rock. 'O, my cousin,' said he, 'why wilt thou languish there, feeding on a wisp of coarse grass that grows between the rocks? Why, my dear, wilt thou not come down into the valley, where thou canst eat the finest grass, and amuse thyself amongst the blossoms of the vine?' 'I thank you, sir,' replied the goat, 'for your kind offer; but for the present I would rather continue where I am.'—Be assured, my countrymen, that the baubles with which the Romans adorn you are no better than the blossoms with which the greedy lion attempted to entice the goat. Be convinced that the toys with which you ornament yourselves are no better than poison covered over with honey. This is the last and most dangerous attempt of the Romans to bring you into a state of bondage; and I fearlessly tell you, that such a course of extravagance and folly as you are now pursuing will certainly be your ruin, unless, like the goat in the fable, you are wise betimes."†

But they would not listen to the warning voice of wisdom: they ridiculed the advice of Gwrgan Farfdrweh, and continued to follow their own headlong course. For many years, their leading men—those who should have been the first to expose the treacherous devices of their oppressors—gave themselves up entirely to pleasure, and every species of luxurious indulgence, which the Romans offered to their

\* *There was a king of this name B.C. 375.*

† *M.S. vet.*

vitiated taste. All the young men, who were capable of bearing arms, were ordered off to distant countries ; and the common people were compelled to labor in various ways, such as making bridges and bricks, and building houses for their oppressors. They were tolerably peaceable for about forty years, and submitted to pay tribute without complaining ; but in the year 124, when SEVERUS ruled in Britain, under the emperor ADRIAN, the whole country, provoked by repeated acts of oppression, (which were so frequent as to be absolutely intolerable,) determined to shake off the yoke of bondage ; and it is said that, if Adrian had not promptly brought over his army, thus affording seasonable aid to Severus, the Romans would have been entirely destroyed. As it was, the contest was for a long time doubtful ; but the Britons were ultimately defeated.\*

The Romans, in order to keep the Britons in subjection, built a wall made of clods and stakes, eighty miles in length, extending across the island, at its narrowest part, from sea to sea ;† and all those who were unruly, and would not submit quietly to their authority, were driven beyond it. Soldiers were stationed in small detachments along the wall, ready to punish any breach of order, and to keep the refractory on the outer side.

For some time after this, peace prevailed to a considerable extent amongst our leading men : but as a running stream, when dammed up, will be calm and placid for a while, and then suddenly burst through its embankments, and carry away every obstruction that would impede its progress ; so were the Britons peaceable for a time—yet, when they found that their haughty invaders were daily adding to their sufferings, they could remain passive no longer. Although their strength had been diminished by the frequent withdrawal of their youthful warriors from home, still there was some valor—some national spirit amongst them ; and now was the time to call it forth. It had slumbered long, but human endurance could go no farther. Those who were beyond the wall thought as little of scaling it, as a war-horse would of crossing a small rivulet ; and the Britons on both sides rose

\* *Spartian ap C. p. 67.*

† *Between the River Tyne and the Frith of Solway.*

simultaneously, as it were, determined to assert the rights of which the unjust oppression of the Romans had deprived them. The scenes which followed almost beggar description. Conspiracies, bloodshed in all its frightful forms, and every variety of cruelty and barbarity, were the inevitable consequences. For many years, it seemed to be the only object of the two nations to devise and execute measures for mutual destruction. It is true, there was now and then a cessation of hostilities ; but it was like the fearful stillness of the ocean which usually precedes a storm—the least breath of air will ruffle its surface, and display the furious *spirit* which lurks beneath. Ever and anon, the work of slaughter would be renewed with increased virulence and ferocity.

During this confusion, thousands fell beneath the hand of vengeance, including persons of every age and degree, as well Romans as Britons. It is said that fifty thousand of the officers and soldiers of Rome were slain, exclusive of others who were not attached to the army. The truth is, the two nations were equally obstinate : neither would yield to the other, or cease to bathe their hands in blood, after they had once commenced the work of destruction.

About the year 197, the emperor SEVERUS came over to Britain with a very large army, composed of nearly one hundred thousand horsemen and footmen. His determination was to destroy the Britons entirely, as soon as he landed. An old poet, in allusion to this event, says :

LEAVE not a Briton in the land—  
Respect not rank, nor sex, nor age :  
Uplift thy strong avenging hand,  
Nor stay till thou thy wrath assuage !

But, notwithstanding all the threats of Severus, and his attempts to terrify the Britons, he found no little difficulty in effecting his purposes. The greater part of the people, it is true, had experienced so many of the awful consequences of war, that they began to think of submission. They thought it could be no reproach to pay tribute to the Romans, since all the rest of the world had bowed to their authority, and acknowledged them as their masters. They therefore sent a message to the emperor, beseeching him to revoke the bloody

mandate which he had given to his legions, and promising to be his faithful subjects. The emperor, on receiving twelve of the most eminent men in the kingdom as hostages for the fulfilment of this engagement, took the petitioners into his favor, and a treaty of peace was agreed upon between the two nations.

But there were thousands of the Britons who were still obstinate, and could neither be persuaded nor threatened into submission. Whenever they were molested, they retreated into the woods and morasses, whither their enemies could not follow them without endangering their lives. By degrees, however, they were subdued, but their conquest was not effected without much bloodshed. But Severus could place no confidence in them, and removed them to the other side of the wall, which he caused to be repaired and considerably strengthened. It is called the Wall of Severus to this day.

Severus was a bold and valiant man, and, during the remainder of his reign, peace and harmony prevailed. He died in the year 213, in the city of York.\* His last words were, "I found the empire full of confusion and trouble; I leave it in the full enjoyment of prosperity and repose."—Peace continued, with but little interruption, for many years after the death of Severus. The Romans were now sole masters of Britain, and there were few servants in the kingdom who could not understand and speak the Latin language.

In the year 238, in the months of November and December, the first comet made its appearance, shooting its rays in a manner then quite astonishing. The summer seasons, during the three following years, were so wet that the grain did not ripen, and the people, especially the poor, suffered greatly from the scarcity of bread, and the unhealthy nature of other provisions. In the winter of the third year, there was a continual frost from the middle of November until the beginning of February: the ensuing summer was favorable to the crops, which, by the blessing of God, yielded abundantly, and supplied the wants of the people.†

\* *Then the capital of England.*

† *MS.*

From this period, history is silent with respect to the affairs of the Britons, until the year 286, when CARINUS, a man of obscure family,\* but a valiant soldier, was sent from Rome with forty ships under his command, to keep off the French† and English,‡ who were pillaging the country now called France, then *Gelli*, (a Welsh word signifying a forest or woody country,) for these two nations were at first considered pilferers and vagabonds. Carinus behaved manfully : he entirely subdued those wandering tribes, and took from them a very great spoil. But before long, through a spirit of avarice, he turned a traitor to his master, the emperor DIOCLESIAN, and kept possession of the booty he had thus acquired ; and, lest he should be called to account for this breach of faith, he filled his ships with the spoil, and sailed over to Britain. Here, by flattery, he gained the affections of the people. He repeatedly promised them that, under his government, they should enjoy far more liberty and happiness than under that of the Romans—that he would be their faithful and steadfast friend, and protect them against the encroachments of all their enemies. But, when he got the government into his own hands, he acted like a cruel oppressor, rather than a protector ; and, because he kept his hand so heavily upon the necks of the Britons, the emperor Dioclesian forgave his treachery, and confirmed him in the government he had assumed. On this account, the money coined in his reign bears, on one side, an inscription of two outstretched arms, and on the other of two hands united. Some specimens of this coin are still extant.§

Where there is not *right*, there is always *fear* : so Carinus, to render himself more secure in his government, built seven castles along the wall of Severus, to protect him from the attacks of all those who considered him as a usurper : he also erected a large house of hewn stone, on the shore of

\* *Filissime natus.* Eutrop. p. 687.

† It was not the present race of the French who then lived in that country.

‡ We wish our author had been a little more explicit, and informed us who these English were, and whence they sprang. It would have added to the interest of the work, and have filled a chasm in history.

Pub's.

§ *Camd.* p. 78.

Caran, in which the courts of that part of the kingdom were held.\* After a cruel reign of seven years, he was treacherously slain by ALECTUS, his own officer, in whom he confided,† and who also usurped the government for three years, when he was slain by PHAN AP LLYR, who reigned six years, and was put to death by COEL CODENOG, earl of Gloucester. His son CARADOË went to North Wales, where Bronwen, his aunt, was buried in a square grave on the coast of Alw, in the isle of Anglesea. After the death of Caradoc, his son EUDDAF was made viceroy of Britain, by his cousin, Constantine the Great, as I shall shew hereafter.

These were evil days, when the sharper the sword, the greater the power. About this time, an honorable duke, named CONSTANTIUS, came over to Britain, who was afterwards emperor of the whole world. He arrived at a seasonable moment, for he preserved the large and flourishing city of London from being destroyed by the French, who, taking advantage of the confusion into which the country was thrown, (when our great men were contending amongst themselves,) had landed upon our shores, and were committing depredations in every quarter.

The gratitude of the Britons to Constantius, for having delivered them from the hands of the French, was almost without bounds. In token of this, coin was issued in London, containing his likeness on one side, and, on the other, a representation of a temple between two eagles—signifying, no doubt, that their religious privileges were safe under his protection. That he was favorable to the Christians, and did more for them than any of his predecessors, is evident from the following remarkable passage in the history of his life:‡ “He thought within himself, that he would satisfactorily prove whether the officers of his court were sincere Christians or not; for they were nearly all nominal Christians. So he called them all together, and told them that it was his will that those who would sacrifice to the gods should retain their privileges, and continue in his court; but that

\* *Vide Uss. Primord. p. 586.*

† *Ad generum Cereris sine cæde et sanguine pauci descendum Regis et sicca morte Tyranni.*

‡ *Sozom. Hist. Eccles. lib. 1, c. 6.*



those who would not submit to this must leave his service. Upon this, the real Christians bowed their heads, and went out; but the hypocrites remained with the emperor, saying that they were willing to sacrifice. The emperor then called in those who had gone out, and ordered the others from his presence; concluding, justly, that those who would betray their God could never be faithful subjects to himself."

There never was a Roman so greatly beloved by the Britons as Constantius, and he, in return, favored them more than any other nation; nor is it easy to decide who shewed the greater love—the Britons, in their respect and obedience to the emperor, or he, in his courteous and kind attention to them. In order to establish permanent peace between the two nations, and to remove every cause of wrath and bitterness, he married HELENA, the beautiful and virtuous daughter of Coel Codebog,\* king of Britain, by his wife Stradwen, the daughter of Cadfan ap Conan, prince of North Wales. Of this wife he had a son, whom he named CONSTANTINE, afterwards Constantine the Great, the most celebrated man in the Christian world, and the first emperor who was baptized in the faith of Jesus Christ.†

Helena was a Christian, fervent in the faith, and as far ex-

\* Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, speaking on the subject of this marriage, says: "Notwithstanding the recent tradition, which assigns for her father a British king, we are obliged to confess, that Helena was the daughter of an innkeeper; but at the same time we may defend the legality of her marriage, against those who have represented her as the concubine of Constantius."—*Pub's*.

† "Constantine now (A.D. 311) openly professed himself a Christian. He put an end to the persecution which had raged against that sect for the last ten years with all the violence of the expiring storm. His conversion, perhaps, was sincere: possibly he saw that the Christians were become the most powerful body in the empire, and that the wisest policy was to give way to what could not be resisted without imminent danger. He issued two edicts—one assigning them the temples of the gods, in places where they had not suitable churches; the other giving them the preference in all appointments to civil and military offices: and thus, in less than three centuries from its origin, Christianity became, in effect, the established religion of the empire. Constantine, however, deferred his baptism till a little time before his death."—*Outlines of History*.

called others in her duties to God and man, as she was exalted above them in rank and wealth. She took a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to see the place where Jesus Christ suffered for the sins of the world, according to the words of the angel to the women, "Come, see the place where the Lord lay." *Matt.* xxviii. 6. She there, with great difficulty, found the cross on which Christ was crucified. The Pagans, on account of their hatred to the Christians, had thrown a frightful heap of stones on the spot, and under these were found three crosses : but, as the board which contained the inscription was broken and lying on one side, the cross of Christ was known (as old historians inform us) by its efficacy in healing the diseases of the sick.\* An early poet, in allusion to this event, thus expresses himself :

HELEN, fair daughter of the king,  
(Whose praise the poet loves to sing,)  
Found, near the spot where Salem stood,  
The cross whereon CHRIST shed his blood.

She died in the eightieth year of her age, and was buried at Constantinople. Constantius, the emperor, died long before her, in the year 313, and was interred at York, in England.† It is said that a lamp was found in his grave in the reign of Henry VI., which was placed there at his burial, and had been burning continually until that time, being more than twelve hundred years. A similar lamp was found in the grave of Tullia, the daughter of Cicero, the Roman orator, which had been burning for 1550 years,‡ but was extinguished upon the admission of light into the tomb. This was a wonderful invention. It is thought that the lamp was fed by gold made like quicksilver ; but, however this may be, the art is now lost.

As soon as Constantine the Great was informed of his father's illness, he lost no time, notwithstanding the distance, in coming over to Britain. On his arrival, he found the venerable old man in the article of death—having laid aside his regal dignity, and prepared himself for an exchange of

\* *Sozam. Hist. Eccles. lib. 2, c. 1, edit. Lovan. 1569.*

† *Camd. in Yorkshire.*

‡ *Sa'muth in Paveir P. 1, Tit. 33, p. 124.*

worlds. A rebellion having broken out in Italy, Constantine was compelled to return to Rome immediately after the burial of his father. Previous to his departure, however, he exerted himself so to arrange affairs, as to ensure a continuance of peace throughout the island. He made Euddaf, his cousin, governor of the greatest part of England; appointed Cenau ap Coel, his mother's brother, viceroy of Cernwy; his cousin, Cynedda Wledig, son of Gwawl, his mother's sister, he made ruler of Wales; and Finion Urdd, another cousin, he invested with full authority in the North, about the intersection of England and Scotland.

After making these appointments, he took leave of the country; and the Britons, in return for the generous treatment which they had received at his hands, and in token of respect for the memory of his father, raised a large army to accompany him in his expedition against the rebels who were conspiring to deprive him of his crown. Having been successful in their enterprise, some of this band returned to Britain; but the majority of them either remained in Rome, or, on their way home, preferred tarrying in that part of France now called Brittany, where they eventually settled, A.D. 313.

The thrones of Britain and Rome were now occupied by members of the same family; and Constantine, willing to evince his love for the Britons, refused to levy from them the tribute money which had been exacted by his predecessors—receiving merely a nominal sum, by way of acknowledgment that they were the subjects of the Roman empire. He had territory sufficient beyond the sea: he was emperor of France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia: And was not this enough?

But to return to Britain: Euddaf, being advanced in years, and having but one daughter, named Helena, was desirous of settling the crown during his life-time, that there might be no dispute about the succession after his death. It was the advice of his lords that he should bestow his daughter's hand on Macten Wledig, whose father was a Welshman, a son of Llywelyn, brother of Coel Codebog: his mother was a Roman, (for his father, Llywelyn, had gone with his

nephew Constantine the Great to Rome, and had married there.) Maccen Wledig was born and raised in the Roman court, and, being of royal blood on the paternal and maternal side, was considered a suitable husband for Helena, the heiress to the crown. He was at this time in Rome, where he had recently quarrelled with the emperors Valentinian and Gratian, because they would not allow him to share the throne. His heart was never more light than when he received the message from Britain, with the offer of Helena, the daughter of Euddaf, for his wife, together with the British crown as her portion.

But, after his marriage with Helena, he was not satisfied to wear the British crown alone. Had he done this, his memory would have blessed through succeeding generations; but he looked far beyond his humble destiny in Britain, and aspired to be the head and emperor of the world. To do him justice, however, it was not his own ambition, but the love which his soldiers manifested for him, that instigated him to this, contrary to his inclinations; for all agree in saying that no man possessed higher qualifications for that exalted station, had his claim thereto been valid: but he was nearly related to Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great.\*

He was so greatly beloved by the leading officers in the army, that he was chosen and proclaimed emperor, not only in Britain, but by the army beyond the sea; and, although somewhat reluctant to accept the proffered honor, he was at length persuaded. That there might be no obstruction placed in his way, a countless number of British troops declared their full determination to stand by him, and support his claims, even unto death. They then sailed towards France.

The two rightful emperors, Valentinian and Gratian, were now greatly alarmed, and were at a loss what steps to take to arrest the progress of the British army. In order to prevent them from proceeding towards Italy, they entered into a confederacy with the wild hordes of Scythia, who had heretofore been committing depredations in Britain; furnished them with arms and money, and sent them over to this

\* *Maximus vir, strenuus et probus, atque Augusto dignus nisi contra sacramenti fidem, &c. Paul. Diac. p. 628.*

country, encouraging them to do all the mischief they possibly could—even to kill, and burn, and destroy. They expected that this would induce Maesen to return: and who would have imagined otherwise? But Maesen was resolute: he had other objects in view, and the saving of his country from the depredations of the Picts (for so these new invaders were called) was with him but a secondary consideration. He therefore proceeded with his men towards Italy, where he signalized himself, not by his valor and generosity—not by such deeds as had made him the idol of his soldiers, but by his cruelty and barbarity. As the emperor Gratian, a worthy man, was hastening towards home, to visit his newly-married wife, he was treacherously slain, whilst crossing a river in his chariot, by Anarawd Gethin,\* one of Maesen's officers, who was lying in wait for him; and his brother, Valentinian, fearing the same fate, retreated far into Asia, towards the East.†

After being so long successful in rebellion, it might have been expected that Maesen would have attained the object of his ambition, and been crowned emperor, particularly as there appeared to be no obstacle in the way. But here the proverb was verified, "The Devil is a bad master;" for whether Maesen feared that Valentinian would return with a strong army from Asia, or whether his conscience accused him, or whatever was the cause, he certainly never effected his purpose; for he was killed by his own men, together with his son, Owen Ffandn. To crown the whole, Anarawd Gethin was drowned in the same place where he had lain in wait for the innocent blood of the excellent Gratian. In consequence of these events, the whole army of Maesen were scattered through the country; but the greatest part of them, with CONAN, earl of Meiriadoc, at their head, remained in Brittany. This was the second settlement of Britons in that part, and took place A.D. 383.

Conan, being determined that no marriages should be contracted except with his own countrywomen, sent to Britain for a number of them, and eleven thousand of all degrees, rich and poor, immediately embarked for Brittany; but,

\* *Adragathius.*

† *Paul. Diac. Loc. cit. Sozam. l. 7, c. 13.*

whilst on their voyage, a frightful storm arose, and three of the ships were sunk; the twelve which escaped were driven by the impetuosity of the winds and waves to the coast of Llychlyn, where they were taken by the Picts, who, when they saw the beauty of the maidens, endeavored to seduce them, but their attempts were indignantly repelled—so, at least, say the ancient chronicles. In commemoration of this noble display of chastity, a holiday is still observed, on the 21st of October, which is called the Feast of Virgins; and there is a church in Cardiganshire, known as the “Virgins’ Church” (*Llan Gwyrnfen*)—a name which it received at its consecration, in honor of them. It is said that the Britons in Brittany took these females for wives; and when a child was born of one of them, (if the story be a true one,) the husband was accustomed to cut the tongue of his wife, lest she might teach the language in a corrupt manner to her children.\*

At this time, Britain was full of confusion and disorder. An emperor would be proclaimed one day, and deposed the next: his successor, in like manner, would scarcely assume the imperial robes, before his throne was vacated, and himself beheaded. Such was the uncertainty of popular favor, which, fickle as a breath of wind, was continually changing its objects and pursuits. It would be useless to mention the whole of those who were thus speedily raised to the dazzling summit of ambition, and as quickly descended “to the tomb of all the Capulets;” for it would but swell the volume with a dry and uninteresting detail of circumstances, and effect no possible good.† Yet one of them, CONSTANTINE, descended from the royal stock of the Britons, deserves honorable mention. In addition to his indisputable title to the crown, he owed his elevation, in part, to the virtue of his name, which induced the hope that he would be as brave, as wise, and as generous as his predecessor and kinsman, Constantine the Great.

Constantine was a celebrated warrior, and was so successful that France, Spain, and Britain were under his government for many years; and he lacked little of being the chief

\* *MS. vet.*

† *Soz. Hist. Ecclæ. lib. 9, c. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.*

emperor of the world, and being crowned in Italy. In the midst of all his pomp, however, when he was beginning to enjoy the fruits of his conquests—when foreign nations paid him homage and respect, and when peace was returning to bless the people over whom he reigned, he was treacherously murdered. Upon his death, his soldiers were dispersed; but the majority of them remained with their countrymen in Brittany. This was the third time the Britons left considerable numbers of their people there. A.D. 409.

The long continuance of such disorders shook the Roman empire to its centre. The domestic feuds which agitated and confused her internal policy, added to the attacks of the hordes of barbarians who assailed her from without, reduced her strength, and rendered her an easy prey to faction and contention. The soldiers were unruly, and continually changing their masters. They made emperors when, how, and of whom they pleased, and unmade them at pleasure. A very slight pretext, only, was required to dethrone the man who, but a few days before, was a popular favorite. Such being the state of affairs, it was no wonder that it was found impossible to maintain authority over the various distant portions of the empire. Rome had grown great beyond all former precedent: she had given laws to the whole world, and had held it in subjection: but now she was declining under her own weight, and rapidly falling into decay. About the year 410, the emperor Honorius, finding that he could no longer maintain his ground in Britain, gave up its government, and recalled the army home to Italy, where there was greater need of their services.

This was the origin of the gold and silver that are occasionally dug out of the earth, in many parts of Britain: when the emperor withdrew his troops so suddenly, they concealed the treasures they had acquired in holes and caves of the earth, hoping that they would have an opportunity of re-possessioning them; but this never occurred.

At this period, Britain was entirely without a military force; and her old enemies, the Picts, taking advantage of her defenceless situation, were afterwards successful in their

\* *Ide Uss. Primord.* p. 600.

depredations. Great numbers of the Romans, however, remained here, who, either by marriage or otherwise, were connected with the Britons, and were unwilling to sever the bond of union. Hence it is evident, that we, a remnant of the ancient Britons, are a mixture of Irish,\* Greeks,† and Romans.

\* *Because they were the old inhabitants.*

† *Brutus and his followers were Greeks.*



### CHAPTER III.—*The wars between the Britons and the people called Picts.*

THE learned are not altogether agreed as to the origin of the *Fficti*, a race of people so named from the Latin word *Picti*, (painted,) because they were in the habit of painting themselves in representations of various objects and colors, particularly blue. Their name in Welsh is *Brithwyr*, a word signifying spotted or speckled men. In this translation we shall call them Picts, according to their Latin name.

Some late writers are of opinion that they were a race of degenerate Britons, or rather such of them as, being bold and valiant men, resided beyond the wall of Severus, and would not on any account submit to the yoke of the Romans, and become slaves to their oppressive government.\* According to old historians, however, (whom, in this case, we should consider the most competent judges,) they were a wandering tribe from Scythia, who landed in Britain about A.D. 75, under the command of their chief-captain, Rodri, having been driven from their own land by famine; and, because they seemed inclined to take forcible possession of certain parts of the country, without even making acknowledgments therefor, Meuric, one of the British kings, collected his troops together, to see what effect the force of arms would have upon their incursions; and in the first attack, when the front ranks were engaged, Rodri was slain, together with one half of his army. That this event might be kept in remembrance through succeeding generations, Meuric caused a monument to be erected, with this inscription, "*The Victory of Meuric.*" Seeing this, the remainder of the Picts were desirous of obtaining conditions of peace from the Britons; and upon laying down their arms, and making due submission, the king spared their lives, and gave them permission to reside in a part of Scotland. As the Britons would not give their daughters in marriage to these wanderers, they went over to Ireland, and intermarried with the people of that

\* *Camb. sub Picti, Baxt. Gloss. Antiq. Brit. p. 195.*

country. From these connections the Irish and the Picts soon came on the most friendly terms, and, to this day, their descendants inhabit the northern part of Britain, and use the Irish language.

These people continued the practice of painting on their skins the various shapes of birds, beasts, and serpents. In this consisted their ornaments, and this was the reason of the appellation they received of *Picti* or *Brithwyr*. This custom is still practised in many parts of the world, particularly in the Indies.\* In addition to the opinion of ancient historians,† and a great number of the best modern writers,‡ I have been induced to maintain that the Picts were a wandering tribe, from a particular game which is still preserved in some sections of Wales, especially on the shores of the river Cardigan, in South Wales. In this play, they divide themselves into two parties, under the names of *Brithwyr* (spotted men) and *Henwyr* (old men.) The *Henwyr* consist of persons of the familiar names of Evan, David, John, and Jenkins; and the *Brithwyr* of those of any other names. The *Henwyr*, consisting of only four names, are generally the more numerous. Now, by *Henwyr*, it is certain that the original inhabitants are designated; and the *Brithwyr* are considered strangers or foreigners.

It was about the year 75, as we have before remarked, when the Picts first landed in Britain; and, although they intermarried with the Irish, they remained for several centuries a separate and distinct people; and it is not very certain whether they were eventually cut off in war, or whether they formed one nation with the Irish, for history has made no mention of them for the last eight hundred years.

For any thing we know to the contrary, they may have been a peaceable and industrious people at first; for there is no account of their creating any tumult or disorder during three hundred years after their settlement in Britain. But

\* *Dampier*, vol. 1, c. 18, p. 514.

† *Bed. Hist. Eccles. lib. 1, c. 1; Galf. lib. 4, c. 17; Pont. virumn. l. 5, p. 30.*

‡ *Uss. Primord. p. 302; Stillingfleet Orig. Brit. c. 5, p. 246.*

when they had acquired strength, and formed friendly alliances with the Saxons and the French, (who then lived by plunder,) they rushed upon their old masters, the Britons, and rent them to pieces with as little mercy as a body of eagles would shew to a flock of lambs. This, however, was done only when the British army was scattered, and at a distance from the scene of their barbarities; but, as soon as they were apprised of the approach of their archers, they would fly to the mountains and deserts beyond the wall of Severus.

You heard in the last chapter how the young Britons took up arms with Macsen Wledig, with the intention of making him emperor of the world; and also how Valentinian and Gratian furnished ships and money to the Scythians, sending them to Britain, and encouraging them to commit every species of depredation they possibly could, with the expectation that Macsen would return to the assistance of his own country. Fearing that the Picts, of themselves, would prove inadequate to the undertaking, they enlisted the services of the Saxons and the French, that they might, if possible, utterly destroy the Welsh nation, and divide their country amongst themselves.

About the year 386, and subsequently, our ancestors were made to feel severely the indignation of the Most High, for their ingratitude and wickedness. Four fierce and cruel nations combined against them—the Saxons, the French, the Picts, and the Irish, who took pleasure in torturing and burning them, and were so far from having any compassion or feeling, that they took delight in hearing the sighs and groans of the slain. “Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces, and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb: their eyes shall not spare young children.” *Isaiah*, xiii. 18. Who can describe the desolation caused by these four nations, who, having lived in the practice of barbarities from their youth, and almost from their infancy, were striving with each other who could inflict the greatest torments and cruelties upon the poor Britons—especially when there was not an arm raised in their defence, or a voice to cheer them under their accumulated sufferings. The walled cities, it is true, were retained without any serious loss; but the small towns sent forth many a red flame to the skies, whilst the wretched inhabitants were expiring in agonies amid the burn-

ing ruins; and, to add to their torture, their enemies were rejoicing around them, and laughing at their woe.

While these scenes were occurring, Macsen was not ignorant of the deplorable condition of his country. He was informed of the manner in which the Britons were suffering, and, wicked as he was considered, he sent over two legions—about fourteen thousand men,\* to their assistance. These he could easily spare, for he was yet in France, and all that kingdom had submitted to his authority.† Never was a detachment of soldiers so acceptable. The enemy were greatly superior in number, and small companies of them, with four or five hundred men in each, were scattered through every part of the country; and, before they had an opportunity of collecting together, those of them who were in the vicinity of Kent and London, and the centre of England, were almost entirely destroyed; but those about Wales, and near the sea shore, escaped in their wicker-boats to Ireland.‡

How many thousands have suffered from a want of prudent foresight and seasonable preparation! To neglect, in summer, when the bounties of nature are spread around us, to provide against the inclemency and scarcity of winter, is the part of a fool. So the Britons, after one triumph over their enemies, never thought of providing against another attack. They underrated the vindictive spirit of their savage opponents, as well as their strength, and the claims they still had upon the Romans for assistance. They deposed their officers, and disbanded their army, as if their services would never be required again. For some years after this signal defeat, the Picts and their allies appear to have been quiet and peaceable; except that, now and then, they would plunder a drove of cattle or a flock of sheep, burn a village or hamlet, and then make their escape with impunity. But when they found that the Britons had sheathed their swords, and had become insensible of impending danger, they took advantage of their supineness, and were determined to exterminate such a worthless people.

\* *Galf. Hist. Brit. lib. 5, c. 16.*

† *Brower in venut. Fortun. lib. 3, p. 59.*

‡ *Carruca. Gildas, p. 16.*

It is true that the Britons had greatly degenerated : they no longer displayed that courage and military ardour by which they were once characterized ; and, when the Picts and their allies poured down their forces upon them, they had lost all resolution, and had not firmness sufficient to withstand them. Although their army was small—very small in comparison with that of their invaders, yet, had they relied upon the strong arm of Heaven—had they called upon their God for assistance in this their time of need, He never would have suffered such uncivilized wanderers to trample them under their feet, and inflict upon them such cruel barbarities. This duty they omitted : they became disheartened, and, instead of arming their young men, and encouraging them to gird on their swords for the contest, they sent a petition to Rome, setting forth, in terms of lamentation, their suffering condition, and earnestly desiring assistance. Such aid was hardly to be expected at this time, as the Roman empire was in a situation which seemed to demand the presence of all its forces at home. The emperor, however, moved by their intreaties, sent over a legion of choice men, amounting to about seven thousand. Upon their arrival, rumor soon magnified their number into five legions ;\* and when the Picts, who were spreading desolation through the middle of the country, heard it, they retreated beyond the wall of Severus, and fled into Ireland ; while those who were in the neighborhood of London, or committing depredations along the banks of the Thames, were utterly destroyed by the Roman soldiers. This took place about the year 814.

The Romans then, like good counsellors, gave useful directions with a view to the future safety of the country. They exhorted the Britons to repair the breaches in the wall of Severus, hoping that it would prove a check on the incursions of their enemies : and doubtless it would have done, had it been of stone with lime mortar ; but it was merely an earthen wall, built from sea to sea, with here and there a tower or castle to defend it. It was consequently of little service to the Britons ; and the Romans had scarcely returned to Italy,

\* *Ita MSS. Gildas vero, et Beda nonnihil secus.*

† *Murus inter duo maria non tam lapidibus quam cepitibus factus. Gildas, p. 13.*

when the Picts and Irish again landed from their boats in the northern seaports, and recommenced their depredations, if possible, with greater fury than ever. They made holes in the wall, killed those who were stationed there to defend it, and drove off and ate the cattle, (probably raw.)

Gildas remarks that the Picts were a hairy, ugly, and frightful people, very similar to Nebuchadnezzar, when he was driven into the fields to eat grass like a beast. They were unmerciful and cruel, and appeared to have an insatiable thirst for slaughter and destruction. Such the Britons found them at all times. They had no redeeming qualities: there was no trait in their character, either individually or nationally, that was praiseworthy or even pleasing. There is no account of their allies, the French and Saxons, being with them in this excursion. It is probable that they felt more keenly than the Picts the vengeance of the Romans, because they confined themselves chiefly to the interior of the country, where they first landed.

The Britons had now grown so dispirited, that they made no opposition to the incursions of their invaders. They submitted to all kinds of degradation—suffered themselves to be driven into caves, and even to perish with hunger, rather than attempt to repel the aggressors. They had lost all courage and energy; and, while the Picts were ravaging their country on all sides, they either looked on with senseless indifference, or peaceably submitted to their repeated indignities. About this time, however, when extirpation stared them in the face, a council of the leading Britons was held, at which it was determined to invoke once more the interposition of the Romans, and to offer, as a tribute for their assistance, the abject and total submission of their country. The names of those who were deputed to carry this resolution into effect, were PERYF AP CADIFOR and GRONW DDU AP EINION LYGLIW. Notwithstanding the situation of affairs at Rome could scarcely justify an expectation of assistance, yet, by the importunities of these men, they obtained a legion of troops, who returned with them to Britain, and soon dispersed or destroyed their enemies; but DYFODAG, the leader of the Picts, with about 2,500 of his men, fled into Ireland and escaped. This occurred in the year 420.

It is evident that the power of the Britons must have been greatly reduced at this time, when a single legion proved of such essential service. Several causes combined to produce this depreciation of strength. 1st. The Romans, during their reign in Britain, carried off a great number of the young men to fight their battles in distant lands. 2d. The major part of the youth, who remained after the Romans left the country, either followed Maxen Wledig to France and Italy, whence they never returned; or, as we have already observed, formed the body-guard of Constantine, after his visit to Britain, with the intention of making him sole emperor of the world. 3d. Those of the young men who still remained in Britain were totally ignorant of the art of war; and bravery, unless accompanied with skill and discipline, is but a minor ingredient in the *materiel* of a soldier. Such were the causes which had weakened and enfeebled the Britons: thus had they been shorn of that strength, which their skillfulness in war, added to their native courage, would otherwise have rendered almost invincible. At a subsequent period in their history, HENRY II., king of England, in a letter to EMANUEL, Emperor of Constantinople, pays the following merited tribute to their daring bravery: "There is," says he, "in a corner of this island, a people called *Cymri*, (Welsh,) who are so courageous in defence of their country and their rights, that they will even dare to oppose, open-handed and without weapons, an enemy armed with a spear, a sword, and a shield."\*

It was not to be expected that the Romans could render assistance to the Britons on all occasions, so great was the distance between the two countries, and so uncertain the destiny which awaited the Imperial City. Before the legion left the island, therefore, they admonished the leaders and the people to be valiant in defending themselves from the attacks of their wandering opponents; assuring them that they were every way superior to them, if they would but shake off their apathy and inactivity. Besides instructing the young men in the art of war, they assisted in the erection of a new wall of stone,† twelve feet high and eight feet wide, with numerous

\* *Ut nudi cum armacis congredi non verentur. Girald. Des. Camb. v. 256.*

† *Gild. p. 15; Bed. l. 1, c. 12.*

towers upon it, in the place of the old earthen wall built by Severus, "which the Britons had not at that time skilful artizans enough amongst themselves to repair."\* The towers were built so near together, that the sound of a bell could be heard distinctly from one to another. The design of this was, that, in case of the sudden landing of the enemy, the bell nearest to the seaport where they disembarked should be rung, which should be answered by the next, and so on until the alarm was sounded throughout the whole kingdom, in order that preparations might be made to repel the hostile invaders.

These improvements having been completed, a summons was sent through England and Wales, inviting all the nobility to London, a few days before the departure of the Romans. When they were assembled, CYHELYN, the archbishop, addressed them as follows: "My lords, I have been requested to preach to you; but I feel inclined to weep rather than to preach, because of the calamities which have befallen you since Madsen Wledig deprived the British island of its brave and youthful warriors. It is evident that you have lost your skill in war, and that you are better acquainted with agricultural pursuits; for, when your enemies came down upon you, you fled like sheep having no shepherd. How long will you court a union with the Romans, and rely upon them for assistance against these foreigners, who are inferior to you in every respect, if you will but exert yourselves, throw aside your sluggishness, and renerve your mean, submissive spirits? Know you not that the Romans would willingly forgive you the tribute money they have heretofore exacted, rather than be continually called from their homes to fight your battles here? Had you seen the brave warriors who once dwelt on this island, you would blush for your own weakness and cowardice. Yet I cannot believe that humanity has entirely deserted you. Acquit yourselves, therefore, as men: Call on Christ, that he may endue you with courage, and bless you with liberty."

The Romans soon afterwards returned home, taking a final leave of the island, after exhorting the Britons to be courageous and undaunted, telling them that the consequences of

\* *Goldsmith's Hist. of Eng.*



their cowardice would fall only on themselves, and that their complaints would receive no further consideration at Rome.

The country was peaceable for about three years after this. The Britons were in some measure on their guard, and watched over their interests with vigilance and care. The Picts and their allies, judging that the Romans had taken the island under their protection, were afraid to commit any overt acts of violence, lest they should again be chastised by the victorious legions: they therefore remained at home, in Ireland and the adjoining islands. But about the year 425 they made their re-appearance in the island of Anglesea. At the same time the Saxons\* made a descent upon Kent and the adjacent country; and, between the two, it is easy to imagine the scenes of slaughter and bloodshed which quickly overspread the kingdom, especially in the neighborhood of London and in North Wales. The havoc and destruction caused by these barbarians was certainly an awful judgment upon the people; but their wickedness and ingratitude called down upon them a punishment tenfold more fatal. About this period, the Pelagian Heresy found its way into Britain,† not through its author himself, (for he was then in Jerusalem,) but through some of his disciples, who preached it secretly in private houses, and overturned the faith of multitudes of the common people who were not established in the principles of religion. The scope of this doctrine was, "That, inasmuch as Jesus Christ had satisfied the divine will for the sins of mankind, every christian could please God and be saved without the help of his grace." It is likely that the Britons of that age were as little acquainted with the scriptures as they were skilled in the art of war; and as they had formerly sent to Rome for assistance against their enemies, the Picts, so now they sent to their neighbors in France,‡ requesting the aid of their learned men to refute this dangerous heresy. In compliance with this request, two excellent and pious bishops, GARMON and LUPUS, came over, and,

\* *Bed. His. Eccles. l. 1, c. 20.*

† *See 2d Part, 2d chapter.*

‡ *Probably to Brittany.*

taking the scriptures for their authority, in addition to the testimony of the whole of the primitive church, and the powerful reasonings of divinity, defended the Catholic faith in such a masterly manner, that all acknowledged that God was with them, to the shame and confusion of their opponents, and the great consolation of those who were sound in the faith.

But their enemies, the Picts, the Irish, and the Saxons, were still in the country, spreading devastation in some quarter or other continually. The Britons, it is true, had an army in the field, but the men were timid and disheartened. When Garmon and Lupus discovered this, they observed, "Be not faint-hearted, or alarmed because of your enemies. We will be your leaders. Our trust is in the Living God, the Lord of Hosts." When they became aware of their situation, the bishops commanded the army to halt in a shady valley, thickly covered with trees, and not to move from their position until the enemy passed by; and whatever they saw their leaders do, they should do likewise. Before long, the Picts marched through the valley. when the two bishops arose upon their feet, and shouted "Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!" and the soldiers, following their example, sprang upon their feet, crying out, with all their strength, "Alleluia!" &c., until the whole valley reverberated the sound. The Picts, thus taken by surprise, were so terrified and alarmed, that many of them were drowned in their haste to escape across an adjoining stream.\* This occurrence took place soon after Easter, A.D. 427; and the place is called, to this day, Maes Garmon, (Garmon's Field.)

After this, the boldness of the Picts and other barbarians was checked for a while; for, as long as the Britons feared God, and departed from evil, their enemies troubled them not. No sooner, however, did they forget God and neglect his worship, than their old foes made preparations to pay them another visit. Although a majority of the Britons were professed christians, yet their conduct was bad, for they did not live according to the injunctions of the scriptures. As long as Garmon and Lupus remained amongst them, they were a religious people, at least in appearance; but, after these

\* *Vide Uss. Primord, p. 179, ubi hæc fusius.*

holy men returned to France, they forgot their instructions—their zeal for religion decreased—they ridiculed its ordinances, and by degrees gave themselves up to levity and foolish diversions: in short, they seemed to have no recollection of the tribulations through which they had so recently passed. In the course of a few years, they had reached the very acme of national impiety. Not only were the common people sinning against Heaven “with a high hand and an outstretched arm,” but even the clergy—the ministers of that holy religion, which enjoins upon its professors to be patterns of virtue and uprightness—joined in the general wickedness. Banquetings, drunkenness, lasciviousness, usury, envy, and hatred, were common crimes; to which was added as much contempt and dishonor for the commandments of God as the corrupt heart of man is capable of manifesting. “A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land.” *Jer. v. 30.* It was no wonder, therefore, that the judgments of the Most High—war, pestilence, and famine, should fall upon them. “Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?” *Jer. v. 29.*

It was not long before the Picts and the Irish again landed in Britain, and, like so many furies, insatiate for blood, set no limits to their barbarous cruelties. When it is considered that for ten years they continued their work of destruction, imagination cannot depict the melancholy scenes which followed. No regard was paid in this offensive warfare to age, sex, or condition; for all shared the same fate. The hearts of the invaders were never alive to feelings of mercy or compassion. They had been trained to deeds of blood, and were never in their element but when in pursuit of victims on whom to glut their accursed rage. The Britons knew this, for they often experienced its dreadful effects: still, like thousands of others, they would not relax an iota of those very indulgences, which had on all previous occasions rendered them an easy and almost unresisting prey. The Picts and their allies never attacked them, except when they knew them to be so enervated by pleasure and luxury as to be unable to make any successful opposition.

The greatest part of the Britons who could possibly escape, retreated into the deserts, as well to obtain the pro-

tection of the rocks as to seek subsistence. Their food, in this desolate exile, was scanty, consisting of what they could obtain in the chase, with now and then a few birds, and such roots and berries as the various seasons afforded. Such were the delicacies, or rather the only articles of food which these wretched people enjoyed.\* These are the consequences of indulging in sin, and forsaking the laws and ordinances of God.

O, Sin is the fountain, whence constantly flow  
 Distress and pale fear, lamentation and woe :  
 Groans, anguish, and trouble arise from its waves,  
 And sorrow encircles the banks which it laves :  
 The vengeance of Heaven it invokes from the sky,  
 And ALL whom it falls on must certainly die.  
 The horrors of warfare attend in its train,  
 And fevers, and sickness, and harrowing pain :  
 The city's proud walls 'neath its influence fall,  
 And famine and pestilence wait upon all.

At last, after having for a long time suffered affliction, oppression, famine, and cold, the Britons determined again to implore the Romans for assistance ; and about the year 446 a petition was sent to Ætius, then governor of France, (under the emperor,) couched in the following language . “ The groan of the Britons to Ætius, governor of France.” (This was the inscription.) “ The barbarians, on the one hand, drive us into the sea, and the sea, on the other, throws us back upon the barbarians ; and between them there is no alternative : we must either be killed by the barbarians, or drowned by the waves.” This is only an extract from the letter,† but it is all that history has handed down to us. We can judge, however, even from this fragment, in what a deplorable situation the Britons were now placed. Language could scarcely furnish terms to convey a stronger idea of their extreme wretchedness and misery. It is brief, but forcible, and must have operated powerfully on the humane feelings

\* *Tam crebris direptionibus venaretur omnis regio totius tibi baculo excepto venatori artis solatia.* Gildas, page 166.

† *Et post pauca querentes repellunt barbari, &c.* Gild. p. 16, 6

of the Roman governor ; but the affairs of the empire were such that no assistance could be rendered to them.\*

At this time, Britain was again afflicted with a severe famine ; in addition to which, the Picts were burning the grain and all other food, except such as they required themselves. They also drove the Britons once more into the deserts ; and the seasons were wet and cold, insomuch that the little that was sown did not ripen. But, notwithstanding all these tribulations, the Britons were a sinful, stiff-necked people. Some of them became slaves to the Picts, in order to save themselves from starvation : others chose to perish in caves and in holes of rocks, rather than submit to their enemies ; but very few called upon the Lord in their trouble. If they had done this in sincerity, they would have had no reason to fear the attacks of any foe, nor would they ever have seen a foreign power taking their country by force ; because " The name of the Lord is a strong tower : the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." *Prov. xviii. 10.*

But after a long time—after receiving the punishment that was due in this world for their sins, the Lord was pleased to touch their hearts, and bring them to themselves ; and they returned, like the prodigal in the gospel, with penitence to their Heavenly Father. Although their number and their strength were greatly reduced, yet the Lord endued them with power from on high, and the army of the Picts, numerous and formidable as it was, could not withstand them : with all the reinforcements they received, they did not obtain a single victory, because the Britons put their trust in God, and " His arm brought salvation." The leaders of the Picts and Irish, being wounded, fled beyond the wall of Severus, into the Highlands of Scotland ; and others escaped across to Ireland. (See *Deut. xxviii. 7.*)

It might have been expected that the Britons, after passing through such fiery trials, and experiencing such signal deliverances, would have served God with reverence and godly

\* " *The Romans, at this time, pressed hard by Attila, the most terrible enemy that ever assailed the empire, were unable to attend to the complaints of their allies.*"—HUME'S HIST. OF ENG.

fear. They had witnessed the vengeance, the destruction, the havoc, which had followed them almost unceasingly, whilst they were a by-word amongst the surrounding nations for their wickedness and impiety. They had also enjoyed the blessings and happiness of domestic life, and the splendid triumphs of national independence, when they feared God, and obeyed his commandments. They had experienced the extremes of adversity, and attained the summit of prosperity—yet, for all this, they were a wicked, rebellious, and disobedient people.

Having driven away their enemies, and obtained peace at home, they began industriously to till the ground; and, the season proving favorable, their crops of grain and supplies of fruit were more abundant than had ever been known before.\* But a few years passed away, in the enjoyment of every blessing which a bountiful Creator could bestow upon them—they were secure in their dwellings, and “fared sumptuously every day;” but, “as the dog returns to his vomit,” so they departed from the path of duty, and sinned against God, if possible, with a higher hand than ever. “But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked.” *Deut.* xxxii. 15. They anointed kings—not such as conscientiously walked with God, but such as were more noted for their cruelty than other men; but the tenure by which they held their offices was uncertain and brief, for they were soon dethroned, and replaced by others still more wicked.† If any one was desirous of leading a quiet and virtuous life, and turned his feet from the path of wickedness, he was despised by all his countrymen, who could not, in their own opinion, sufficiently dishonor him. Those who received the greatest honors, and were generally respected, were the most abandoned characters. The people paid deference to vice and immorality, whilst they treated modest and retiring virtue with contumely and contempt. They could laugh at the misfortunes of the pious poor, whilst they feasted and pampered the rich libertine and the wealthy debauchee. Nor was it the laity alone who thus delighted in wickedness, and despised the knowledge of God; for the clergy also “left

\* *Tantis abundantium copiis insula affluebat, &c.* *Gild* 9, 19, p. 17.

† *Ibid*, p. 13.

the ways of uprightness, and walked in the ways of darkness." *Prov.* ii. 13. Instead of watching over their flocks, and preserving the sanctity of their temples inviolate, they passed their time in the taverns, singing vain and obscene songs.\* One of the poets of that age, complaining of their neglect of their pastoral duties, sang in the following strain :

OUR Priests were as gold,  
Ere religion grew cold,  
And powerful were they in prayer ;  
But now they are beasts,  
And revel at feasts,  
No longer our pastors they are.

In short, there was no class of the people, rich or poor, clergy or laity, who did not indulge in all manner of wickedness to which the depraved nature of man is inclined. " But this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart : they are revolted and gone." *Jer.* v. 23. In the midst of their career of licentiousness, they were suddenly arrested : they heard the appalling intelligence that their cruel and merciless foes, who had so repeatedly humbled their pride, had again landed on their shores. The news spread rapidly through the country, and produced a sensation of unmingled horror and dismay in the minds of the people. They began to review their conduct, and, when destruction stared them in the face, to repent of their evil deeds. They recalled to their recollection the scenes of carnage which had characterized the previous invasions of the Picts and Irish—pictured to their minds the burning of villages and the torture of themselves and their families, and, in short, gave themselves up to despair. This effect, however, was but momentary : the report turned out to be untrue, and the people soon resumed their accustomed practices. Therefore, because they would not listen to the warnings of Heaven, though delivered in a voice too intelligible to be misunderstood, the Lord sent a deadly plague† amongst them, which carried off such immense multitudes, that those who survived could scarcely bury the dead. " If thou wilt not observe to do all the words

\* *Vino maditi torpebant resoluti.* *Gild.* p. 18, 6.

† *The Quotidian Ageue.*

of this law, then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful—even great plagues, and of long continuance." *Deut.* xxviii. 58, 59. Soon after the plague had somewhat abated, the Picts returned in earnest; and between the destruction caused by the one, and the devastation produced by the others, it is easy to imagine how wretched and miserable the poor Britons were. These afflictions induced them to call in the aid of the Saxons, who proved eventually a greater trouble than either the Picts or the plague.



**CHAPTER IV.**—*The wars between the Britons and the Saxons—The Plot of the Long Knives—The history of Uthr Bendragon, Arthur, &c., Princes of Wales—A sketch of the Laws of the good King Howell.*

HAVING already shewn the pitiable condition to which the Britons were reduced by their indolence and apathy, and, above all, by their ingratitude and contempt of God, I will proceed to prove the extreme foolishness and madness they manifested in seeking the assistance of the Saxons.\* It would be as wise an action to set a wolf to defend a flock of lambs from the fox, as it was for the Britons to petition the Saxons to protect them from the Picts. Yet this is no more than God threatens against the disobedient. "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, the Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart." *Deut. xxviii. 15-28.* They feared the Saxons before as the sons of Belial, (signifying an elf from the bottomless pit,) yet, such was their blind infatuation, that they sent messengers to invite them over to Britain, to aid in repelling an enemy who were in no-wise more valiant than themselves, had they only shaken off their indolence and apathy, as the Romans and many of their own countrymen had repeatedly told them.

It is not accurately known what facilitated the entrance of the Saxons (a people from the neighborhood of Hanover, in Germany) into this island. Some writers assert that the circumstances which induced them to come over were as follows: The crown of the kingdom descended, by inheritance, to a pious man named CONSTANS, who was raised in a monastery, to the intent that he should devote his life to the service of religion; and, on this account, he was unacquainted with the practices of the court, as well as the civil laws of the country. He therefore appointed a governor under him, to manage the affairs of the court, and to super-vise the general concerns of the kingdom. The name of

\* *O altissimam sensus caliginem! O desperabilem crudamque mentis hebetudinem! Gild. 23, p. 30.*

this governor was VORTIGERN: he was a presumptuous, wily man, as the sequel of his history will prove. After having the royal authority in his hands, his first endeavor was to get possession of the crown, and to murder his master. In order to effect his purpose, he bribed about a hundred of these sons of Belial to rush into the king's chamber, and assassinate him. Having made the necessary arrangements, and written songs in praise of Vortigern and in contempt of Constans, they seized upon the first favorable opportunity to carry their bloody design into execution. Having slain the king, they brought his head to their treacherous employer, who made pretence to weep, although his heart was never more delighted. This he did to deceive the people, by making them believe that he had no concern in the murder; in addition to which, he caused the men whom he had hired to perform this cowardly and brutal act to be beheaded.\* This is the reason why some think that Vortigern invited the Saxons over to Britain to defend him, lest he should be deposed for his treachery and villany. However that may have been, it is certain that there had been great confusion and disorder amongst the Britons ever since the final departure of the Romans from the island. The right, title, or qualifications of an aspirant to the throne, were but secondary considerations with the people, if, indeed, they possessed any weight at all; but whoever had the greatest power, and the most abandoned character, had the best chances of success. He would thrust himself into the highest station, and retain it until deposed by some one stronger than himself. This is proved beyond dispute by Gildas, a writer of the sixth century. So Vortigern, lest he should lose his ill-acquired throne, as most of his predecessors had done, called in the aid of the Saxons†—a people who had formerly appeared on the island in a very different capacity from that of protectors. This may have been one reason, amongst others; but it was chiefly to oppose the Picts that the Saxons were first sent for.

Vortigern, after consulting with his officers, dispatched four of his courtiers to negotiate with the Saxons, and invite them over to Britain. They were accompanied by numerous

\* *Galf. lib. 6, c. 7, 8, 9.*

† *Nenn. c. 28. Vide Orig. Brit. c. 5, p. 318-19.*

attendants, who were to protect them. When they arrived at their destination, if the English chronicles are true, (for the account is given by an Englishman,\* and not a word is said respecting it in the Welsh histories,) these messengers addressed an assembly of the Saxons to the following effect: † “We poor Britons, wounded and sorely afflicted by the repeated assaults of our enemies, implore your help and protection in the trouble and distress to which we are now reduced. Our country is extensive, and produces every thing necessary for the support of man. You shall have a portion of it: it is large enough for us and you. Hitherto the Romans have generously protected us; and, next to them, we know of no nation who have given such evident proofs of bravery as you have done. May your arms proclaim your valor in the island of Britain: it will be a pleasure to us to perform any services which you may enjoin upon us.” To which the Saxons replied: “You may rest assured, honorable Britons, that the Saxons will be true kinsmen to you, and readily aid you in your troubles and difficulties.” Now, the truth is; this speech is nothing more than a fabrication of the Saxon historian; for the instructions of the messengers were to obtain the services of the Saxons for such a remuneration as they could agree upon. ‡ Not a word was said of allowing them to take possession of any part of the country.

There were some amongst the Britons who predicted the true state of the case — who could see through the veil which was placed before their eyes to keep them in ignorance of their situation, and whose hearts were sorrowful in anticipation of the destruction which was evidently approaching. They well knew the character of the people who were coming amongst them: they remembered the time when, in alliance with the same nation whom they were now called upon to oppose, they were barbarous, brutal, and unrelenting in their persecution. Although none of them openly expressed their apprehensions, yet some of their comparisons were

\* *Witichindus cit. a Camd. p. 123.*

† *A great mistake occurred in the first edition of this work, where it is said that a letter was sent to the Saxons: for at that time they could not read a word.*

‡ *Vide Annot. in Camd. p. 123: Orig. Brit. p. 318.*

pointed and full of meaning. "When the hornets (said one) get lodging in a bee-hive, the lawful occupants must give place to the intruders. We unto me, if the invitation of the Saxons should verify the proverb, 'Let a bad man into the barn of a good one : ' and many a time it has happened that 'A man's goods are his enemies.' " "I have heard an old fable (said another) of the doves agreeing with the kites for their protection against the crows. The kites, sure enough, dispersed the crows—but what then? Whenever they wanted a dainty repast, nothing would suit them so well as a dove ; and they were not at all scrupulous about satisfying their appetite, though at the expense of the sincerity and good faith they had vowed to their harmless and confiding victims. God grant that this may not be the burden of our song, in the case of our good king seeking assistance from the Saxons." These, however, were but the fearful forebodings of a few solitary priests, in which the people generally placed no confidence, and apparently took little interest. After the return of the messengers, there was great rejoicing at court. The foolish Vortigern thought he could not make sufficient preparations, or provide delicacies enough to welcome them.

Some time in August, A.D. 449, the Saxons arrived in three ships, under the command of two brothers, named HENGIST and Horsa. After feasting and revelling for a few days, and fully agreeing upon terms for their services, that there might be no cause for dispute afterwards, they commenced operations, and soon gave abundant proof of their courage and skill in the art of war. Their number could not have been very great, when three ships transported them all ; yet, by the timely assistance they rendered to the reduced army of the Britons, they were enabled to disperse the Picts, and scatter them to the four winds of heaven. The great leader of the Picts, in attempting to escape, was thrown from his horse, and instantly killed.

The honest intentions of the Saxons (if, indeed, they had any) were soon dissipated, when they witnessed the apathy and indifference manifested by those whom they had come to protect ; and more especially when they had opportunities of contrasting the fertility of the soil and the salubrity of the climate of this island, with the barren and bleak country

which they themselves inhabited. It is easy to talk of national virtue and national honesty ; but, as it is with individuals, so is it with communities : and it is not in the least surprising that self-interest should have so great weight with these Saxons, as to induce the wish to settle in the country which they had redeemed from the ravages of a hostile foe. They therefore sent a message to Saxony, inviting over such of their countrymen as preferred residing in a goodly land, where provisions were abundant, to remaining immured in a country unfruitful and unhealthy. The following is a part of their message : “ The country is excellent, fertile, and productive ; but the inhabitants are feeble, indolent, and careless. If you would improve your condition, stay no longer at home : take courage, and come over to us. It is our intention to fall upon the lazy Britons, that we may get possession of their country for ourselves ; so take care that your weapons are sharpened and fit for slaughter.”

It was easy to persuade them : there was encouragement enough in the idea of despoiling and committing depredations upon the country, to induce them to come over ; and very soon a host of them, far exceeding the first number, (among whom were two sons of Hengist, and his daughter ROWENA,) landed on the island. Here, then, was a fresh cause of alarm and apprehension to such of the Britons as were alive to the interests of their country—who had some of the spirit of their ancestors, and who had seen the former influx of these barbarians with terror and dismay ; but the foolish king, Vortigern, welcomed and succored them, and, in order to silence the murmurings of the people, he said that, fearing that the first army might be insufficient, they had come over to assist in repelling the enemy.

Hengist had, by this time, ascertained the disposition of the king, and was willing to take advantage of its pliability and weakness. In addition to the presents which he and his men had received, over and above their hire, he was desirous of having a walled city under his government, “ that I may be honorable (said he) among the princes of my own country, as my ancestors were.” The reply of Vortigern to this very modest request was not as favorable as had been anticipated. “ Hengist, this would not be right, for thou art a foreigner and a heathen ; and, if I should honor thee like a nobleman

of my own country, the princes would rise up against me.” “But, my lord the king, (said Hengist,) grant unto thy servant as much land to build a castle upon, as a thong will surround.” “Thou shalt have so much freely,” replied the king. Then Hengist took a bull’s hide, and cut it up into one thong, and in the strongest place he encircled with it as much ground as a tolerably large field, and built upon it a royal castle and wall, which the Britons formerly called *Caer y Garrai*, that is, Thong Chester.\* The town now standing upon its site is called Doncaster.†

When Hengist had completed his buildings, he invited the king to pay him a visit. Several nobles also came from Germany, and a great feast was made, consisting of every dainty and delicacy that could be procured. At the conclusion of the entertainment, Hengist, well knowing the weakness of the king, ordered his daughter Rowena to put on her best attire, and to come to the table to pour out wine for the king. The design of the Saxon leader was accomplished to his heart’s content. The lascivious old king was pleased with Rowena, and made amorous proposals, to which she unchastely assented; and when he was rebuked for his sin, by FODIN, bishop of London, (whose duty it was to denounce such wickedness,) the king, in his wrath, threw a spear to his heart, and took Rowena as a concubine.

These things being accomplished so agreeably to the wishes of the Saxons, they waited only for a convenient season and a favorable opportunity to rush upon the Britons, and destroy them. They began to complain that their wages were too little in comparison with the services they had rendered, and far less than their courage deserved. This was a mere pretext. They wished for some cause to excite a quarrel, and were indifferent as to what that cause might be.

\* *Galf. lib. 6, c. 12: Camd. in Lincolnshire, p. 471.*

† *This is now a place of considerable notoriety, and is famous for its spring and fall races, when the best blooded and fleetest horses in the country are brought together, to contend by speed for high and valuable prizes. During these seasons, the town is crowded to overflowing by strangers from all parts of England; but at other times it is a dull, uninteresting place.—PUB’S.*

To silence their murmurings, however, and to remove all occasion for complaint, their remuneration was increased :\* but still they were dissatisfied, and expressed their discontent in strong and emphatic language. "Must we," said they, "venture our lives in defence of this people for nothing, whilst they are indulging themselves in idleness, and living at their ease? No, we will not: we can divide for ourselves."

And so, indeed, they did, in the shortest possible way; for, after receiving fresh reinforcements of their countrymen, who were swarming in multitudes to join them, and having formed a new alliance with the Picts, they rushed upon the defenceless inhabitants, and renewed the barbarities of former times. Neither old nor young escaped their fury—neither male nor female found favor in their sight. Along the shores of the Thames, throughout Kent, and London, and the surrounding country, even as far as Oxford, there was but one continued scene of devastation and bloodshed. [A description thereof, though given in all the terms of horror which the English language is capable of, would fail to be complete. It exceeded all that even the imagination can conceive. It would sound far better in a work of fiction, where tales of terror are introduced to excite the passions of the reader, than in a book purporting to contain a correct history of events which actually occurred. Suffice it to say, the Britons residing in England were indiscriminately massacred in every direction; and those who escaped (and they were few in number) were exposed to an equal affliction in the hunger and privations they experienced in their places of retreat. Those who inhabited the mountainous parts of the country were the only portion of the population who remained secure during the occurrence of this terrible war of extermination. The Picts, as was to be expected, performed a very conspicuous part in these deeds of horror, devastation, and murder.]

When the cruel, infidel sons of Belial had become satiated with the work of destruction, the greatest part of them returned to Germany. Some are of opinion, that they thus

\* *Impetrant sibi annonas dari quæ multo tempore impertitæ clausæ sunt, ut dicitur, canis lancem.* GILDAS, page 21.

suddenly returned home, in order to avoid the stench arising from the dead bodies which they had left unburied and exposed upon the fields. Others think that they had overladen their ravenous stomachs, and chose to seek their old quarters, to enjoy the benefit of the sea air. One of these, or perhaps both, was the real cause. However, it is certain that they did return home ; and, as far as we can learn from ancient historians, they remained there for five or six years. It was in the year 449 that they were first invited to come over to this country, and they were about ten years in the service of the Britons, and fighting their battles, before they treacherously broke their faith, and turned against their masters and employers.

Soon after the horrible slaughter above mentioned, the remnant of the Britons collected together from their hiding-places, and cried mightily unto God for assistance. They deposed Vortigern, who was an usurper from the first, and crowned in his stead a near kinsman of his, named VORTIMER—a gentle, pious, estimable, and brave man, whose good qualities obtained for him the appellation of the Blessed Vortimer.

After Vortigern was dethroned, his son PASGEN, angry at witnessing the elevation of another to his father's throne, left the country, went over to Germany, and joined himself with the Saxons. This traitor (and treachery was the originating cause of all the troubles which befel the Britons) was instrumental in persuading the Saxons to return to this country, to revenge the insult offered to his father. It would have been better both for him and them, had they remained where they were ; for the new king had become so popular, that all the young men in the kingdom flew to arms, and rallied round his standard. He appointed AMBROSIOUS\* (whose father and nearly all his relatives were slain by the Saxons) to be the next in command to himself. This was an excellent appointment, for, in addition to his bravery and courage, Ambrosius was a man who “walked before God in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart.” He fought like a lion in defence of his country, its privileges, and the catholic church of Christ. The Britons, therefore, placing

\* *Emrys Ben-Aur, or Golden Head.*



their trust in the Lord their God, and cleaving to him with all their heart, were soon favored with a manifestation of His mercy. As the two armies shouted for battle, Emrys prayed to the Lord with fervor and in sincerity, when a violent attack was made on both sides, and the field quickly covered with the bodies of the dead and the wounded. Emrys was conspicuous in this engagement: he was seen galloping from rank to rank, with the speed of lightning, encouraging his men, and leading them on to victory.\* Their enemies were completely routed, and scattered in different directions: some fled with the Picts into Scotland, and others beyond the sea into Germany. This occurrence took place about the year 459.

The Britons, having been victorious, and expelled the forces of the Saxons from their country, had too much generosity to fall upon the defenceless women and children whom, in their eagerness to escape, they had left behind them. That would have been a dark spot in their history: it would have marred the brilliancy of the triumph they had just achieved, and posterity would have been taught to consider them as barbarous and merciless conquerors. They therefore permitted these relicts of the Saxons to remain secure and undisturbed in their dwellings. But the wicked will always render evil for good. It is the nature of sin always to array itself in opposition to virtue and uprightness. Ingratitude, the basest of all human feelings, is never so likely to manifest itself, as when the favor bestowed is given to a worthless object—when the recipient has been an avowed enemy. So it was with Rowena, daughter of Hengist. One would have thought that she, of all the rest, would have been grateful for the clemency displayed towards herself and her countrywomen by the British king: but no; she was devoid of all good feeling, and set her wits to work to invent a scheme for destroying the Blessed Vortimer. In order to effect her infernal purpose, she gave the half of her possessions to a daring and wicked young man, named EBISSA, who appeared one morning in the disguise of a gardener be-

\* *Queis (si Britannis) victoria Domino annuente cessit.*  
GILDAS, p. 23.

fore the king, as he was walking in a favorite retreat, and presented him with a bunch of primroses having the smoke of mortal poison blown upon them.\*

When Vortimer discovered that he was poisoned, (the traitor having fled to Rowena,) he called his princes together, exhorted them to be united in defending their country from foreign invasion, and divided his riches equally amongst them all. He also commanded them to burn his body, to put the ashes into the figure of a man, made of brass, and erect it in the seaport where their enemies were accustomed to land; saying that they would never attempt to come ashore, so long as his image remained there. After his death, however, his princes disobeyed his orders, and buried him in London. Such was the patriotism of this excellent king, that, inasmuch as he had been a scourge to his enemies during his life-time, he was anxious to be a terror to them after his death.†

\* *MSS. Hist. vet. Membrana script.*

† There is something peculiarly affecting and impressive in this expressed wish of the British king. Not content with having served his country faithfully, and defeated her enemies signally, during his life, his patriotism carried him beyond the grave. Probably he had a forecast of the dangers to which his country would be exposed: he saw, by anticipation, perhaps, that his princes would not always be able to cope with their adversaries, unless the latter had some memento placed before their eyes, to remind them of their previous discomfitures and defeats. This memento he wished to be displayed in his own person. He had punished the Saxons severely for their ingratitude and heartlessness—his name had been a terror to them—his own bright sword, gleaming like the red flash of vivid lightning, had prostrated many of their comrades in arms; and he thought that, when they looked upon his monument, as it reared its majestic form on high, their minds would naturally revert to his former deeds, and become discouraged from making any future attempts at invasion.

Few men, especially those in high stations,—such as kings or princes, warriors or legislators,—have ever displayed a greater degree of genuine, unadulterated patriotism than this. They have all been anxious to transmit their names to posterity in some form or other; but *their own glory—their own fame* has been the leading object of their desires. It would be difficult to find, in the whole range of history, extensive as it is, another instance of a king wishing that his person and his name should be remembered, solely for the benefit of his country. We fear, indeed, that there are few such kings now-a-days.—PUB'S.

Was there ever a more foolish and distracted people than the Britons proved themselves to be at this time? Scarcely was the Blessed Vortimer consigned to the tomb, whither he had been prematurely hastened by treachery and poison, when they re-proclaimed his predecessor, (whom they had before deposed for betraying their country into the hands of an unprincipled foe,) and placed him again on the throne. Never was there a more fatal exercise of popular will. This was all that his concubine, the insidious Rowena, desired; and no sooner was he elevated to his exalted station, than she sent intelligence to her father that she had effected the death of Vortimer, and that Vortigern, a lover of her countrymen, had re-ascended the throne. Hengist received this information with extreme pleasure, and said to his attendants, "There is yet hope." "It is a very uncertain hope," answered they, incredulously: "We have heretofore thought too lightly of these Britons. They are a brave and resolute people, when aroused to anger." "Fie! fie!" rejoined Hengist: "let not your courage fail you: we are more cunning than they, and what we lack in strength we can make up by stratagem and artifice."

He then collected an army consisting of about fifteen thousand men, besides women and children, and embarked for Britain. He knew that a reconciliation could be easily effected where love existed, and such a feeling, he thought, had been manifested by that foolish king, Vortigern. When the Britons saw the Saxon fleet approaching their coast, (consisting of forty ships,) they blockaded the port, so that the enemy could not land. Hengist then, in order to deceive them, hoisted a signal of peace, and sent messengers to inform the king that the design of his present expedition was to assist him in regaining the crown which had been unjustly taken from him—endeavoring to excite the belief that he was ignorant of the death of Vortimer, and of his own re-ascension to the throne. "Very fair," said Vortigern, as he thanked the messengers for their kindness. "May it please your Majesty, therefore," said they, "to appoint a day when our lord Hengist may speak with your Royal Highness face to face." "With all my heart," replied the king. "But, my lord," rejoined the messengers, "in order that the world may be convinced that we are peaceably inclined, and that our intentions are pure, let every one come unarmed to any

place which your Majesty may select." "Very well," said Vortigern: "we will meet on May-day next, on the plains near Caradoc's wall."\*

When Hengist had thus renewed his intimacy with that worthless king, his daughter Rowena paid him a visit, during which she related to him the particulars of the death of Vortimer—reserving to herself, of course, all the credit which was due to so *meritorious* an act. "Well, my daughter," exclaimed Hengist, when she had finished her narration, "thou art worthy of thy father: I will say that much for thee."†

Hengist then called his nobles together, told them in what manner his daughter had poisoned the Blessed Vortimer, and thus addressed them: "On next May-day, we are to meet the nobility of Britain, under pretence of making an agreement of peace with them; but our intention, you are aware, is to destroy them. When we have put *them* to death, the peasantry will be so terrified as to be unable to oppose us. Without leaders, they will not have courage to rise up against us. To effect our design, however, it is necessary that each of you should carry to the feast a sharp two edged knife, concealed in his sleeve; and, when I say to you *Nemet eour saxcs*,‡ let every one slay the Briton sitting next to him. Remember, this is my command: act like men, and spare not."

The two parties met on the appointed day, and, as a further evidence of sincerity and good faith, Hengist easily effected an arrangement by which a Briton and a Saxon were seated alternately around the tables. Dinner being over, and wine and merriment circulating pretty freely, Hengist suddenly arose from his seat, and cried out *Nemet eour saxcs*! Immediately upon this, the treacherous Saxon nobles drew forth their weapons, and each stabbed the Briton who was next to him. There was not a shadow of compassion manifested: there was no sparing of feelings—no quarter—no respite. The work of butchery was completed, as it were, in a moment. By this inhuman act, more than three hundred of the

\* Stonehenge. † A very handsome compliment, truly!—P.

‡ *Let every one seize his knife.*

princes and nobles of Britain fell victims to the heartless treachery of the Saxons. But EIDIOR, earl of Gloucester, escaped unhurt, and, seizing a pole which was lying at his feet, he killed seventy\* of the merciless monsters who, in the guise of friendship, had thus enticed the Britons to their destruction. Eidiol was a brave and valiant man. This memorable event took place A.D. 472.

I have seen one of the knives said to have been used on this occasion. It was a frightful instrument: the blade was about seven inches long, more than half an inch in breadth, and had two edges extending five inches from the point. The haft was made of ivory: the figure of a naked female, with a globe in her left hand, and her right hand placed upon her hip, was prettily carved thereon; at her right was the representation of a young servant, with the rays of the sun encircling his head. The sheath was also of ivory, very curiously wrought.

ALAS! unhappy day,  
When treach'ry led the way  
To deeds of blood and death:  
When, in the fair disguise  
Of Friendship's holy ties,  
The Saxons broke their faith.

Alas! the frightful knife,  
That finisher of strife,  
The Saxons had concealed:  
When wine began to flow,  
They struck the fatal blow,  
And every blade revealed.

Shaped in the forge of hell,  
Where devils only dwell,  
Was that sharp, frightful blade:  
Its edge was flinty too,  
When each his dagger drew,  
And deadly havoc made.

Then rushed the purple flood  
Of rich and noble blood  
From hearts that knew no fear:  
And many were the sighs,  
And woe-inspiring cries,  
That rent the circling air!

When the intelligence of this barbarous outrage was made public, the common people were almost distracted with terror and dismay. The army of the Britons consisted of only seven thousand men, and even *they* were in an undisciplined and wretched condition. We may here remark, that in this instance, as well as on all previous occasions, they acted with great imprudence; for no sooner had they obtained a victory over their enemies, than their army was disbanded, or scattered in small detachments through the country. This

\* See the account of David's mighty men. 2d SAM'L xxiii.

exposed them to other invasions or incursions : whereas, had they, like prudent and skilful warriors, been continually on the alert, when they knew that danger was lurking around them, and kept their army together in martial order, they would always have been prepared to repel any attack whatever, let it come from what quarter it might. And of what service could seven thousand men prove, even had they been well disciplined, in defending a country so much exposed to the invasions of barbarians, who flocked in multitudes to overwhelm it, and attacked it at every accessible point ? At the present moment, too, they were without a leader—at least, an experienced and able one ; (for, when Vortigern resumed his seat on the throne, the brave Ambrosius was thrust out of command, to make room for one of the king's favorites;) and, when they made an attempt to face the Saxons, they were trampled down, and completely vanquished. The whole country around London were compelled to submit, without a murmur or a word of complaint.

Vortigern (poor simple man !) retreated towards North Wales ; and like Saul, who in his distress consulted with the witch of Endor, (1 Sam. xxviii.) he also consulted with his wise men, who were probably not much more intelligent than himself, respecting the most advisable course to be taken in such a state of adversity and affliction. Their opinion was, that a castle should be built, in some secure part of the wilderness, into which they might retreat, and enjoy safety and concealment. The project was commenced, but, if tradition be correct, they could make no progress with the work ; for as much as was erected during the day fell in the night. The king then sought information respecting this singular occurrence from the wizards, but neither they nor his chief counsellors and bards could give him any satisfactory answer. One of them, however, who had more wit than the rest, said, " Let us tell him of something impossible, that no evil report may attach to the wizards." After gazing for a while upon the planets, they informed the king, that if they could obtain the blood of a boy who was born without a father, and mix it with the water and the lime,\* the work would certainly stand. " It is a sad experiment to try," said Vortigern ; and, just as wise in this as in

\* *By way of making mortar, we presume. — Pub's.*

other matters, he dispatched officers into every part of Wales, (for his authority was now confined exclusively to this section of the island,) to find out a boy who never had a father.\* After they had travelled a great distance, affording much diversion to the people by an explanation of the nature of their errand, two of them came to Carmarthen, at the gates of which city they heard two young men engaged in a dispute. The name of one was MYRDDYN; that of the other, DUNAWT. Said Dunawt to Myrddyn, "Why wilt thou contend with me: thou art a man of chance, and hast no father; whilst I am of royal descent both my father and my mother." "May those words prove true!" said one of the messengers to the other; and they proceeded forthwith to the mayor of the city, and shewed him their authority to carry Myrddyn and his mother to the king in North Wales. When they came before Vortigern, he asked whose son the lad was. His mother answered that he was her son, but who his father was she could not tell. "How can this be?" asked the king. "I was," replied the woman, the only daughter of king Dyfet. My father placed me in a nunnery at Carmarthen, and, as I was sleeping one night between two female friends, I thought that the handsomest young man in the world appeared and took hold of me; but, when I awoke, no person was there, except my companions. At that time I conceived, and this son was born to me; and I call God to witness, that I never had intercourse with any man besides." The king was greatly astonished when he heard this, and, calling Mengan, the wizard, before him, he asked him if this story could be true. "Yes, O king," said he, and gave his reasons, such as they were, for believing it.† The king then said to Myrddyn, "I must have thy blood." "What good will my blood do, more than that of another man?" asked Myrddyn. "My twelve bards have told me that thy

\* We scarcely know whether it was worth while publishing this foolish tradition. It is exceedingly improbable that any part of it is true. However, as it bears evident marks of antiquity, and as our author appears to have believed in it, (for he has appended no note, nor otherwise expressed any doubt as to its authenticity,) we have concluded to insert it.—PUB'S.

† *Merlinus ipse natus est in Cambria, non ex incubo demone, sed ex furtiva venere cujusdam Romani Consulis cum virgine vestali. Poweli Annot. in Girald. Itiner. Cambriæ, c. 8, p. 207.*

blood can cause this work to stand for ever." Myrddyn then asked the wizards why the building was delayed, or why it would not stand; and, when they could not answer him, he called them deceivers and lying traitors. "The reason why the work will not stand is, that there is a gulf underneath the building," said he; and, when he directed the earth under the building to be dug, his words were verified. The king then honored Myrddin, and caused the twelve chief bards to be put to death, because they had attempted to impose upon him, by affecting to know things which they did not understand. Their graves are to be seen to this day, and are generally known by the name of the *Wizards' Graves*.

Vortigern then removed near to the river Cardigan, and, in the midst of a desert surrounded by rocks and mountains, he erected a castle. This situation was, in truth, far from "human ken:" the busy hum of men came not near his dwelling. Like himself, it was solitary and unvisited. It was not from any religious motive that he chose thus to withdraw himself from the world. It was not an act of penance for past offences, or a course of preparation for future events; for he was a wicked man, and like AHAH, the most infamous of the kings of Israel, he had "sold himself to work evil in the sight of the Lord." 1 Kings, xxi. 20. In addition to all his other abominations, he defiled his own daughter,\* by whom he had a son. But God did not suffer such wickedness to continue, without visiting its perpetrator with heavy and afflictive judgments; for, as He rained fire and brimstone upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha, for their unnatural lust. (Gen. xix.) so He also destroyed the castle of Vortigern with fire, and every thing it contained was reduced to ashes. The place, to this day, is called the Rock of Vortigern, and lies about mid-way between Llampeter and Newcastle, on the river Cardigan, in Carmarthenshire. This event occurred A.D. 480.

During this period, the Saxons cruelly oppressed the people in Kent and the adjacent country. The nobility and other leading men were put to death, but the commonalty were reserved for a still worse punishment: they were made slaves

\* *Vide Spelm. Concil. Britan. p. 49, et Uss. Primord, p. 386.*



and bondsmen, and laden like beasts of burden, were compelled to do their masters' bidding without a word of complaint. This was indeed a bitter affliction. They could have suffered death with comparative composure, but to be thus tortured by as rude a set of barbarians as ever disgraced the earth was, to their minds, almost intolerable. The palaces of the nobility were in the possession of the invaders: their gardens, orchards, and meadows, were furnishing them with food and delicacies, whilst the rightful owners of the soil were lying dead upon the open fields—a feast for the ravenous eagle and other birds of prey.

It is, however, proper to admit that the Britons at this time were a wicked people: they were indeed given to uncleanness, iniquity, and the shedding of innocent blood. The Lord therefore punished them in a furnace of affliction, and sold them into the hands of their enemies. "If ye walk contrary to me," said God to the ancient Israelites, "then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will bring a sword upon you that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant; and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you, and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy." *Levit. xxvi. 23, 24, 25.* The sin of the Israelites was adultery and extravagance in the times of prosperity. "They were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbor's wife." *Jer. v. 8.* But "when he slew them (that is, when the Lord visited them with his judgments) then they sought him and returned and remembered that God was their rock, and the High God their redeemer." *Psalms lxxviii. 34, 35.*

The Britons were of the same character; they sought the Lord in their distress, and rejected him in their prosperity. So it was at this time: while the Saxons by perfidy and cruelty kept possession of a great part of England, the remnant of the Britons returned to the Lord their God, with all their heart and all their might.\* Ambrosius, who was commander in chief of their armies in the time of the blessed Vortimer, (as before mentioned,) was now their king; and his fame

\* *Innumeris onerantes æthæra votis.* *Gild. p. 22.*

had spread with such rapidity over the whole kingdom, that there was scarcely a man between the ages of twenty and fifty who was not desirous of carrying arms under him. The inhabitants of North and South Wales, at this juncture, came seasonably to assist their brethren in England; and to tell the truth, there was good reason for it, for when a house is burning every one will lend a hand to put out the fire.\* So now the Britons being a strong army and having their trust in God, they sent a summons to their enemies to depart from Britain, or if they had hearts to fight, to come to the field and engage fairly and not like traitors, having the appearance of friends, and lying in wait for blood. Upon this Hengist was aroused, (for he was yet alive, being now about sixty-seven years of age,) and after consulting his brother Horsa, and others of his chief captains, he replied to the summons which had been sent to him by Emrys to this effect, "that he had as good a right to the land he had subdued by the strength of his arms as the best of the Britons had."

About this, some time in May, 484, there was a dreadful battle fought between the two nations—one taking courage to drive a nation of traitors and murderers out of their country, and the other, outrageous as a fiend, trying to keep possession of the country they had unjustly taken; and after hundreds had fallen on both sides, especially of the Saxons, the two armies approached and fought hand to hand. Frightful indeed was the scene. Some were split in two, with their bowels out; some having lost an arm and others a leg; Horsa was pierced in the neck; Hengist was taken prisoner; the rest fled, the greater part of them wounded with darts sticking in their backs. The soldiers dragged Hengist by his beard toward the king's tent, and when there was a dispute between them what was to be done with him, Dyfrig, the archbishop of Carleon, in Monmouthshire, rose on his feet and

\* We think with the author, that self-interest is as popular as well as an individual motive. If we could separate this from the real motives which actuate our general conduct, how small—how insignificant would the remainder be! It has often been said, and we think with great justice, that the majority of our charitable actions are chiefly induced by this single feeling, or failing, it may be. In our opinion, (and we do not know that the idea is original with ourselves,) self-interest is the nearest approach to perpetual motion that has ever yet been discovered, or ever will be.—*Pubs.*

said "If you were all for acquitting him, I, even I, who am a bishop would bruise him to pieces. I would follow the example of the prophet Samuel, who, when Agag, king of Amalek, was in his hand, said 'As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal.' I. *Sam.* xv. So dear men, said he, do ye to Hengist, who is a second Agag." Upon this, Erdiol, earl of Gloucester, rushed upon him and killed him, and as his sword entered into his paunch the whole army scattered, some here and some there, to seek each a stone to throw on him, and before night there was a considerable heap cast upon him, as was the custom with malefactors. On this account a notorious thief is called in Welsh *carn-lleidr*, the word *carn* signifying a heap, and the word *lleidr* a thief.

Ambrosius was now reposing safely on his throne, and before repairing house or city or any thing else he caused public thanks to be given to God in every cathedral and parish church within the kingdom, because he had been pleased to bless their arms to the subduing of their enemies, and soon after the remnant that remained of the Saxons, submitted before the king with ashes on their heads and halters about their necks, earnestly begging that he would be pleased only to grant them their lives. The king consulted his chief counsellors, and the judgment of Dyfrig, the archbishop, was this; "The Gibeonites sought conditions of peace from the Israelites, and although they sought it deceitfully, yet they obtained it, and shall we Christians be more cruel than the Jews to shut out the Saxons from mercy? The kingdom is large enough; much of the land is yet uninhabited, let them dwell in the mountains and deserts that they may be our servants forever." The king upon this granted them their lives upon their taking an oath promising to be obedient to the king of England, and that they would not take up arms any more against the Britons.

You have heard that Vortigern had a son whose name was Pasgen, who, when Ambrosius was crowned, was very angry, and went the second time to Germany, the country of the Saxons, inviting them over to restore the kingdom to him from Ambrosius. And after he had by flattery and great promises

collected a great army of armed men, he sailed in fifteen ships and landed safely in Scotland, where he left the Saxons with their countrymen whose lives had been spared by Ambrosius, at the request of Dyfrig, archbishop of Carleon in Monmouthshire, and sailed himself with about fifty of his countrymen to Ireland, from whence he expected more help, from Gilamwri, one of the kings of that island. Gilamwri received him honorably, and promised him seven thousand select men to sail with him to Britain. Pasgen and his army landed at Milford-Haven in Pembroke, from whence he marched forward indignantly, raging like a mad bear robbed of her whelps, consuming and destroying every thing toward Carmarthen and the shores of the river Tywi, and from thence to Brecknock and the river Usk; and continued the same course to the Severn sea.

Ambrosius, king of the Britons, at this time was sick at Chepstow, and Pasgen was highly pleased with this news, wishing from the bottom of his heart that Ambrosius was somewhere else besides being on the land of the living. He endeavored to invent some way to kill the king, the devil having taken a leap into his heart; he knew that he had a Saxon in his company (whose name was Alla) as well qualified for the undertaking as any pupil that ever was in the school of Beelzebub. He understood the Welsh language, and was somewhat of a physician; he was a valiant, cunning man, and in order to be a complete traitor he disguised himself, appearing like a priest and yet understanding medicine. "Behold now, (said Pasgen) go and prosper; hasten to the Saxons in Scotland, and when thou hast finished thy job send word to me." The Saxon with the appearance of a religious man, and understanding medicine, easily found access to the king's court, gave the king a drink of herbs which he had gathered in the garden in the presence of all, but he secretly mixed poison in it, and by degrees he disappeared and rested but little until he carried the news to his countrymen to Scotland, and encouraged them to put on their armour. May misfortunes follow him and every hateful traitor like him.

It is said that a star with an immense shaft and terrible in its appearance, was seen by Uthr-Bendragon the minute in which his brother Ambrosius died, And when Uthr and all who

were with him were afraid by looking at the vision, Myrdden said, "O nation of Britons, ye are now bereaved of Ambrosius—the loss cannot be regained, and yet ye are not without a king, for thou, Uthr, wilt be king; hasten to fight with thine enemies, for thou wilt overcome them and wilt possess this island. And thou art the person signified by the star which thou hast seen."\*

Uthr-Bendragon was then crowned in haste. It was not a time, on account of the disturbance then existing, to have many ceremonies and such rejoicing and feasting as would otherwise have been. Ella, the son of Hengist, had persuaded his countrymen, the Saxons, that they were free from the oath they had taken respecting Ambrosius. "What, said he, are ye making conscience of foolish vain babbling. Ambrosius is no more. I gave him a cup to free you from the oath ye have taken: wherefore put on your arms. We are here a strong army of ourselves, and Pasgen has an army of select men at Carleon, in Monmouthshire. The Britons are disheartened. Behold all the riches of the British island will be the reward of our heroism."† There was no need of a long oration; the consciences of the men were pliant enough to swallow an oath and spue it up again whenever it suited their purpose. So now, they being a very great army and hardened in wickedness, and as greedy for shedding blood as ever a flock of hungry ravens were for their prey, they made their attack, killing and destroying every thing before them, in order to meet Pasgen, who by this time had penetrated the Severn sea toward Bristol. Uthr-Bendragon did his part as well as it was possible in such straight circumstances. He sent four sergeants, one to Cornwall, one to the North, one towards Oxford and London, and one to Wales, with letters to the leading men, requesting them to raise men each of them in their own neighborhoods, to save the country from such unmerciful enemies and traitors. It is not known what assistance came from England, but from Wales some great lord of the name of Nathan Lloyd‡ came with

\* *Galf. lib. 6, c. 15.*

† *MS. vet.*

‡ *In chronice Sax. nominatu Nathan Leod, De quo doctus Camd. plane delivat Brist. p. 114, Ed. novis.*

five thousand select men. And they all met on a hill near Bath, in Somersetshire, even Pasgen the traitor, and his men the Saxons, under Ælla and Cerdic, the two chief captains of the host; and on the other side Uthr-Bendragon and his hosts, and Nathan Lloyd and his men from Wales, and having put their men in array on both sides, then began the most cruel battle probably that ever took place between the Britons and the Saxons. Then could be seen the darts flying and buzzing from one army to the other, like a shower of hailstones driven here and there by the wind. Oh what a pitiful sight! some with their bowels out, the horses entangling in the bowels of others; some with darts in the sockets of the eye, and the sufferer yet alive, distracted with his pain; others with a dart in the mouth, one-half of it out on one side and the other half on the other side of the neck; some with a dart in the forehead and the brains gushing out; some darts alighting upon the coats of mail and brazen bucklers sounding like a bell, now and then a dart would go straight to the heart, in these cases the pain would cease in a minute, and instead of physicians to dress their wounds, horses, prancing here and there over these wretched beings bruising the bones of some, pressing others to death, beating out the brains of some, and the hearts and bowels of others.

For six hours there was nothing but wild destruction on both sides, especially among the Saxons, as Gildas our countryman, who was born that year, assures us. "Their hosts this time, notwithstanding their number, were trampled down that there was not as much as one rank of them that escaped unhurt; and the field was covered so thick with the carcasses of the dead that it was no small work for some days to bury them." This battle was fought in the year 495. Arthur the king's son, behaved here with great courage and skill in managing arms, wherefore the poets of that age sing his praises in various stanzas and songs.

There was no war after this for many years, for the Saxons were so crushed down this time, that they never would have been able to rise again in Britain, as far as men can judge, had it not been for the contention and strife that prevailed among the Britons.\* For after they had a safe habita-

\* *Cessantibus licet externis bellis, sed non civilibus, Gild. p. 23, vid. isid. fusius usque ad p. 30.*

tion and rest from their enemies round about, they gave themselves to all uncleanness and iniquity, excess, drunkenness, perjury, and lying, as if they had bid defiance to God and said "We will not have thy law." But above all other wickedness, the gentry and nobility especially, gave themselves without reserve to all uncleanness and adultery; this was the cause that they were lying in wait for blood, murdering one another, making havoc all over the kingdom, doing more mischief than any visible enemy or stranger from a distance. And among other things some of them in their rage, distraction, and anger, let loose the chiefs of the Saxons out of prison, who, as soon as their feet were set at liberty, hastened to their country, even to Germany, and spoke to their countrymen as follows: "Although it is true enough that we have repeatedly suffered by fighting with the Britons, as the consequences of war are always uncertain, yet this arose from the scarcity of men and not from want of courage or skill, and as things now appear we can no less than believe that the British island will yet be in the possession of the Saxons, and that before long, for there is now, said they, only wild confusion and disorder all over the face of the country. Let them alone to kill one another until they are tired and our work will be so much the lighter next time."

It was the best men of the Saxons, their captains and military officers that escaped this time from prison, and went to their country, even to Germany. Their common soldiers were not imprisoned, but as they had no leaders they were made bondmen to the Britons. But discontentment and wickedness brooded in them as well as in their leading men. They still had a desire to take up arms and kill their masters and eat the fat of the country, but they were afraid that the Britons were too many for them. But although the ability of the Saxons was limited, yet their will was vigorous; for they did all the mischief that was within their power; they put poison secretly in the fountain where Uthr-Bendragon used to drink. He had been for a short time unwell, and his physicians advised him to drink spring water every morning. But he being a brave and courageous man lost his life by the treachery of the Saxons. In exchange for his lenity to them in sparing their lives, they presented him with deadly poison.

Such was the acknowledgment that these little men showed, and their leaders who escaped from prison to their own country, represented here and there what an excellent country the kingdom of England was—no more to be compared to it than thistles were to red roses: they also reported the disagreement and disorder that prevailed among the inhabitants, and that they had no doubt if leave was granted to them to raise men and arms, but they would soon be owners of the country. And as when a hart is wounded, curs, hounds, crows, magpies, kites, &c., approach wishing to have a collop of the meat, so many nations collected on this occasion besides the Saxons,\* forming a very great army of about twenty thousand men, all wishing to have their share of the prey of the British island, which, too often for its good, was wounded by internal disagreement and strife.

By the time these landed in Britain, there was a man King Arthur by name, who gave them but little leisure to feast and gorge themselves. At first, indeed, they made shocking havoc where they landed, and from thence toward London, there being at that time none to withstand them. Yes, they destroyed like fire consuming a bush of dry furze, such was their madness and cruelty. But in this time Arthur collected his men, sent a summons (as he was then the chief ruler of the kingdom) to Caron, king of Scotland, and to Caswallon-law-hir† king of North Wales, to Menric king of South Wales, and to Cattwr earl of Cornwall, commanding them all to arm their men, inasmuch as their enemies had come into the country and were destroying all before them. It is not certainly known how many armed men collected when summoned by Arthur, but doubtless there were not near enough to face the enemy in the field. Now and then a severe scuffle would take place, but the Saxons were masters and were becoming more and more cruel. King Arthur, after consulting with his lords, sent a letter with Owen-ap-Urien Reged, to Howel King of Brittany,‡ who was his nephew, the son of his sister, to seek for help against his enemies.

\* *Juti, Angli, Succi. Saxones, &c.*

† *Law-hir, a long hand.*

‡ *A part of the kingdom of France, where Britons or Welsh live to this day. It is about as large as Wales.*



These are the words of the letter :\*

"Arthur, king of Britain, to Howel, king of Brittany, greeting : The untoward barbarians, the Saxons, are still sorely oppressing our kingdom. They were at first hired, as it is well known to your majesty, to fight for us ; but, instead of being our servants, they wish to be our masters, contrary to all truth and justice. What we seek, dear kinsman, is that you would be pleased to send us the assistance of eight thousand chosen men ; and I trust in God that it will be in my power soon to recompense you.

Your unfeigned kinsman,

ARTHUR, king of Britain."

The nephew, like a true christian, feelingly did more than his uncle asked ; for he kindly sent him ten thousand brave and valiant men. Such assistance revived the hearts of Arthur and his men, and soon there was a cruel and bloody battle, which continued with but little intermission for three days and three nights ; and although Arthur was a famous warrior from his youth, and his men also were full of courage, fighting for their country ; yet it must be confessed that they found it difficult to conquer this time. The Saxons were fierce, endeavoring to retain the possession of the country which they had unjustly obtained. They broke the first detachment of the British army the first day, and pursuing them (many of them being wounded) they killed hundreds of them : but Cattwr, earl of Cornwall, overthrew them again, having a thousand horsemen and three thousand footmen with him. The war became sore the second day, and Arthur, from love to his people, exposed his life to the greatest danger : he rushed to the middle of the battle among his enemies, with his naked sword in his hand, called Caledfwlch, and with his own hand, (besides what his knights did,) stabbed more than three hundred of the Saxons. Upon this, the others fled, but not without much blood being shed on both sides. This was about the year 520.

By this time, the best men of Germany, in the country of the Saxons, had had proof of the productiveness of England ;

\* *MS. vct.*

and such was their unjust desire to possess this excellent country, that they fully intended, and that unanimously, to bring men from beyond the sea to subdue it by the sword, and that without fail, even though it should require the whole of their countrymen to accomplish this. On this account king Arthur had but little repose during the whole of his reign: he fought from first to last twelve battles with the Saxons; but notwithstanding the number of unprincipled bloody butchers who thrust themselves here from foreign countries, had it not been for traitors at home, Arthur would have made but little account of them. But "a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand." So it was here: some asserted that Arthur was not a legitimate son, and a great portion of the kingdom abandoned him, and anointed a kinsman of his to be their king, viz. MEDROD, who caused more opposition to Arthur than he had from all other quarters: for besides his treachery against the crown, and the assistance he rendered to the Saxons, he took by force GWENHWYFAR, the queen, and kept her for his wife. Thus the greatest part of the ancient Britons continued to be a wicked, unclean, contentious people; and Medrod was one of the three betrayers of Britain. The other two were AFARWY, the son of Illudd, who betrayed the kingdom to Julius Cæsar, and Vortigern, who was the first that invited the Saxons to Britain.

There are many traditions concerning Arthur, which appear to be without foundation. It is said there was a great dispute amongst the Britons about the choice of a king after the death of Uthr-Bendragon, the father of Arthur, and that Myrddyn called the choicest men of the kingdom to London, and commanded the priests to pray that God would be pleased to make known by some sign who was worthy to be king of the island of Britain; and the next morning there was found in a great four square stone something resembling a smith's anvil, and in it was a sword standing by the point, with the following inscription in letters of gold: "Whoever will draw this sword out of the anvil shall be the righteous king of the British island." When this was made known to the princes and priests they gave glory to God, and some of them attempted to draw the sword out of the anvil, but were unable; and the priests told them that there was none of them worthy to wear the crown of the kingdom. But Arthur took hold of the sword, and drew it out without difficulty.

These and many other similar stories gave such offence to some men, that they will dare to contend that there never was such a king as Arthur. But we ought not to deny a plain truth, although it be dressed in the garb of tradition. None but a madman would contend that the sun never arose, because it was obscured by a cloud at the time : and it is as certain that such a king as Arthur reigned as that Alexander did, although the history of each is mingled with fables ; because the poets of that age speak of king Arthur. We have already mentioned Taliesin. Another of them, called old Llywarch, in one of his songs connects a place which he calls *Llongborth* with the name of Arthur. Some believe that Llanborth, in the parish of Penbryn, in Cardiganshire, is the place which the poet calls Llangborth : this is not unlikely. There is a place near Llanborth commonly called *Maes-Glas*, (blue or gray field,) but the old name is *Maes Llas*, or *Maes y Galanas* (that is, the field of murder or massacre.) It is very likely that some of Arthur's men were betrayed and put to death here by Medrod. There is another place in this neighborhood, within the parish of Penbryn, called *Perthgereint* (the word *gereint* signifying kinsmen.) It is also very likely that many of the kinsmen of the commander of Arthur's ships were buried here, as old Llywarch in another part of his song uses the words *Llongborth* and *gereint*, and with them he speaks of great slaughter. The following are extracts from his poetry in Welsh :

“ Yn Llongborth llas i Arthur  
Gwyr dewr cymmunent a dur  
Amherawdr Llywiawdr llafur.”

And again,

“ Yn Llongborth y llas Gereint  
Gwr dewr o goed-tir Dyfneint  
Hwynt hwy yn lladd gyd as lleddeint.”

Besides this, the grave of Arthur was found at the close of the reign of Henry the second, about the year 1189, with these words inscribed on a crucifix of lead, and nailed to his coffin : “ Here lieth Arthur, the famous king of the Britons,

in the island of Afallon.'" It was by the works of the old poets that the place where he had been buried was found. His coffin was made of a hollow oak and buried nine feet deep.

Arthur had palaces in various places besides his principal residence in London. Sometimes he resided at *Caer-y-gam-las*, a beautiful city in Somersetshire; sometimes at Gelliwyg, in Cornwall, and often at Carleon, in Monmouthshire, which was the third city as to its beauty and extent in the kingdom, and the seat of an archbishopric.

Arthur being a sensible man, for the purpose of preventing strife among his noblemen respecting the highest seats at the table, is said to have been the first who invented round tables, that all might sit at them, without any preference or distinction. And the following are the qualifications which he required all the knights who were permitted to sit at his table to possess:

1. That every knight shall keep good arms, and be ready for all services at all times on sea or land.

2. That he ought always to endeavor to subdue all who oppressed or extorted from the people their just rights.

3. That he defend and assist widows, deliver them from the snares of malicious men, restore their property which had been unjustly taken from them, and maintain the Christian religion manfully.

4. That he ought, as far as possible, to keep peace and tranquility in the kingdom, and drive all enemies away.

5. That he ought to encourage every famous act, and put a stop to all manner of vice, assist the oppressed, exalt the privileges of the catholic church, and assist pilgrims.

6. That he ought to bury soldiers that lie exposed on the

\* *Hic jacet sepultus Inclitus Rex Arturus, in insula Aralonix. Vide Camd. p. 65, Ed. novis.*

field of battle, deliver prisoners and such as were unjustly kept in bondage, and heal such as had been wounded in fighting for their country.

7. That they ought to be courageous, and to venture their lives in every honorable service, and yet to be fair and just.

8. That every one, when he performs some excellent act, ought to commit the same to writing in some record book, for the everlasting glory of his name and his fellow knights.

9. If complaints are brought to court for perjury or oppression, the knight whom the king would appoint to try the same ought to defend the innocent and execute justice upon the guilty.

10. If a knight from a strange country should happen to come to court, and wish to show his courage and strength, then the knight whom the king would appoint ought to fight with him.

11. If a lady, a widow, or a spinster, should complain to the court that she had been ravished, then one or more of the knights ought to defend her, and avenge the wrong upon the perpetrator.

12. That every knight ought to teach young lords and knights to manage arms with dexterity—not only to avoid idleness, but also to add to the honor of their offices and to their courage.

The Saxons had no possession, nor the kingdom permanent rest, while Arthur reigned; although it is certain that he was as renowned a king and as famous a warrior as any that ever existed in the christian world. But after his death, which took place in the year 543, there was a multitude of foreigners swarming upon us, and the oppression of the Saxons still increased, yet they had not full possession of England until the time of CADWALADER, about the year 664. At this time there was a frightful and very mortal plague in England, called in Welsh *Fall-folen*, perhaps somewhat similar to the yellow fever; and because of this plague Cadwala-

der and the greatest part of the Britons who were under the government, went over to their countrymen, in Brittany.

This was the time that the Saxons had full possession of England—not as the reward of their courage or skill in war, but because of the contentions and divisions that prevailed amongst the ancient Britons, and because God would punish them for their contempt of his holy law, and all their abominations. The Britons who were in Wales remained in their country, but those who resided in England went with Cadwalader, their king, to Brittany; and after the plague had ceased in Britain, they returned home\* and resided in Cerniw† now called Cornwall, where they have continued ever since, although the original language is lost, except in nine or ten parishes. The ancient Britons were thus separated, some of them residing in Brittany, others in Cornwall, and another portion in Wales; but yet, they made many attempts to drive the enemy away, which proved, however, unsuccessful.

Those who wish to understand the history of the Welsh princes, should read the Chronicle of Caradoc, of Lancarfan. At first, there was only one prince to govern the whole country; but Rhodri the Great, who began to reign in the year 843, divided Wales into three districts, giving one to each of his three sons.

To Gadell, the eldest son, he gave South Wales, to Anarawd, the second son, he gave North Wales, and to Mervin, the youngest, he gave a district called Powys in the middle of the principality. The royal palace of Gadell was the castle of Dinefwr, near the river Tywi, the seat of Anarawd was Aberffraw, in Anglesea, and Mervin fixed his residence at

\* *Powel's Chron.* p. 8.

† *This country is to be seen from many of the hills in Glamorganshire. It is called Cerniw from Cern, cheek, because it has the appearance of a cheek, being surrounded by the sea.*

**Mathrafael.\*** David Nanmor, who wrote about the year 1450, confirms this part of the history.†

The design of Rhodri the Great, in this arrangement, was to ensure safety to Wales. He thought that, as the inhabitants of North and South Wales were, in a manner but one family, they would live together like brethren, and would, if necessary, unite their forces against the Saxons. But the result was quite the reverse; for they soon began to quarrel, and there was scarcely one prince who had not much contention and bloodshed during his reign.

The Good HOWEL was the most famous of all the princes of Wales, and began his reign in the year 940. He enacted an excellent code of laws to be kept through the principality, which were observed until the time of Henry the seventh, king of England, the grandson of Owen Tudor, of the island of Anglesea. When the Good Howel saw (says the chronicle) how the customs of the country were abused, he sent to the archbishop of St. David's, and all the other bishops in Wales, and the principal ministers of the church, amounting in all to a hundred and forty, as well as to the lords, baronets and gentlemen of the country. He then directed six of the wisest of each wapentake‡ to come before him at his palace on the river Daf,§ and with these bishops, ministers, and

*\* Mathrafael is still known by the same name. It is situated in the parish of Llangyniwr, in Montgomeryshire, and it is said to be a fine farm on the river Vyrnyw about three miles from Llanfair, Cucremion, six from Welsh Pool, and five from an excellent old castle called Powys castle, owned about 40 years ago by lord Powys.*

† In the original, an extract from a poem of this writer is given, but it is presented in a form which entirely precludes the possibility (as far, at least, as we are concerned) of anglicising it. In one or two other instances, we have found it equally difficult to versify extracts from the Welsh authors, and have been compelled to omit them.  
—Pub's.

‡ *A district containing one hundred families.*

§ *It is probable that the diocess of Llandaf has its name from this river.*

others of his subjects, he spent the whole lent in fasting and prayers, for the assistance of the Holy Ghost to restore the laws and customs of the country, that God might be glorified, and the people governed in peace and righteousness. At the end of lent he selected twelve of the most learned of them, with Blegwryd, a renowned doctor of the law, a sensible man and of great literary acquirements, at their head, and commanded them to examine all the laws and customs of Wales—carefully to select those which were expedient, to explain those which were obscure, and annul those which were unnecessary. Thus he ordained three different kinds of laws,—the first having reference to the government of his court and the family of the prince; the second relating to the finances or general treasures of the kingdom; and the third respecting the principal customs and privileges of his subjects. When these laws had been read and published, he caused them to be written in three books—one to be kept and used continually in his own court, the second to be kept in his palace at Aberffraw, and the third in his palace at Dinelfwr; that these laws might be observed in the three provinces when necessary. In order to secure the adherence of his subjects to them, he directed the archbishop to proclaim that all those who did not obey them would be excommunicated. Here follow a few of these laws:

“A judge ought to hear fully, to learn carefully, to set forth plainly, and to judge mercifully. A man should be twenty-five years of age before he is made or appointed a judge. The reason is, that he will be neither properly learned nor fully sensible until his beard grows, nor will he be a husband until he has a beard, and it is unbecoming to see a boy judging an old man.

The necessitous man who walks three towns with nine houses in each town, without receiving either alms or entertainment, and is taken with stolen food in his possession, shall not be hanged.

Are there two brothers who ought to have only the share of one brother of the same father and mother? Yes: twin-brothers ought only to have the share of one heir.



If there should be a dispute whether the relatives of the father or those of the mother should maintain an heir until he attains his majority, the law decides that one of the mother's family ought to maintain him, lest any of the family of the father should treacherously take his possessions from him, or poison him.

If a woman marry without the advice or consent of her parents or other relatives, her children shall have no portion of the land descending from their mother's relatives.

Three offenders shall be adjudged worthy of death, viz. he who betrays his lord, he who outrageously and designedly kills another, and the thief who confesses for the value of more than fourpence.

If a husband and wife separate and divorce before seven years elapse from the time of their marriage, the husband shall refund the wife her portion or dower, her household furniture, and her wearing apparel, provided that she was a virgin when they were married; but, if she desert her husband before the expiration of the period before mentioned, she shall forfeit the whole, with the exception of her wearing apparel.

If two men are walking together through a wood, and the foremost be the occasion of a branch of a tree striking the eye of the other, so that he lose it, let him make compensation for the eye, unless he gave timely warning of the falling branch: in the latter case, he shall not pay.

When two persons are walking in company, if the foremost find any valuable article, he shall divide the value with the hindmost; but, if the hindmost is the finder, he need not divide with the foremost.

Two punishments shall not be inflicted for one and the same offence.

If a man say a rough or unbecoming word to the king, he shall pay him a fine:

If a man find hogs running in his fields, any time between the 25th of September and the 15th of November, he may kill one out of every ten for his own use."

In the year 1108, a great portion of the kingdom of the Netherlands, in Flanders, sunk. The major part of the inhabitants who escaped, and had no homes, came over to England, made known their destitute condition to king HENRY I., and besought him to grant them permission to reside in some corner of the island. Henry was generous enough with what did not belong to him, and gave them leave to settle in and about Haverford-west, in Pembrokeshire. At the same time, the Britons were quarrelling amongst themselves; and this, as we have already seen, was their continual misfortune. About a hundred years after this, (the Welsh being still disorderly and contentious,) LLYWELYN, son of Edward,\* prince of Wales, collected an army, and when they had pitched their tents, and were resting on Cefn Cynwarchan, the English from Flanders, who resided in and near Haverford-west, and who have enjoyed secure habitations in that neighborhood, with but little interruption, ever since, sent to him, requesting conditions of peace. Llywelyn at first refused their application, and formed a determination to destroy them entirely, or, at least, to banish them from Pembrokeshire; but, at the request of Edward, bishop of St. David's, he granted them their lives on the following conditions: 1st, That they would pay him a large sum of gold and silver: 2dly, That they would take an oath of allegiance to him and his heirs for ever: 3dly, That they would send twenty of their best men as hostages for the fulfilment of their promises.†

It was in the year 1293 that Wales first submitted to the king of England. Its subjection was effected by treachery and deceit. This was, however, a thousand times better for the people generally than the wretched subjection under which they had lain to the princes who, like ravenous wolves, had been greedy for each other's blood; because, when Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, the last prince of Wales who was of genuine Welsh blood, died, EDWARD I. sent to the

\* *Ap Jorwerth, in Welsh.*

† *Powell's Chron. p. 277, 278.*

chiefs of the Welsh nation, commanding them to submit to his government, and become subjects of the crown of England. Their reply to this demand was, that they never would submit except to one of their own nation, who must be of good moral conduct, and unable to speak a word of English. The king, finding that he could not intimidate them, resolved upon an expedient to deceive them. His queen being pregnant at the time, he sent her to Caernarvon Castle to be delivered; and, when a son was born, he was artful enough to send to the chiefs of the Welsh people, to inquire if they still retained their former determination. Their answer was in the affirmative. "Very well," said Edward, "I will name you a prince possessing the qualifications you desire. I have a son, born at Caernarvon: he shall be your prince. He does not know a word of English, and no fault can possibly be found with any part of his conduct." They were at first unwilling to receive the babe as their king, but at length reluctantly consented. From that time to the present day, the eldest son of the king of England has been surnamed the Prince of Wales. Llywelyn ap Gruffydd fought against the combined strength of England and Ireland, naval and military, at the same time. He destroyed the whole of the Irish fleet, and put the king of England, his son, and their army, to flight.\* Thus the prince, whom the united forces of England and Ireland could not vanquish, fell by treachery in his own country; like a giant oak, the king of the forest, which, after withstanding the heaviest storms unmoved, at length yields to the puny axe of an ignorant woodsman. Llywelyn was betrayed at Builth, on Friday, the 11th of December, 1282: his head was elevated on an iron pole on the Tower of London, and his body buried in a place which was thereafter called Cefn-y-Bedd. It is not, at present, known where his grave was located.

[Here follows, in the original, an ingenious elegy on the death of Llywelyn; but we are not able to put it in the form of English poetry.]

It may not be improper, in this place, to mention the time and manner of the subjection of Ireland to the crown of England. DERMOT McMORROGH, one of the five kings

\* *Powel's Chron.* p. 322.

of Ireland, being driven from his throne by **RODERICK O'CONNOR**, who was ambitious of ruling the whole island, appealed to **HENRY II.**, king of England, who received him with very great kindness. The truth is, Henry had long wished for an opportunity to subjugate Ireland, and he conceived the present as favorable to his design. He therefore dispatched an army with **Dermot**, who landed in Ireland on the 1st of May, 1170. By the assistance of the English, he recovered his throne and possessions; and, in less than two years afterwards, king Henry himself sailed to Ireland, subdued the whole country, and made it subject to his authority.\*

\* This account of the subjugation of Ireland is too brief and partial, and places the ostensible reason for the expulsion of **Dermot McMorrogh** from his throne in too favorable a light. All other historians agree in depicting his character in terms of censure and disapprobation; and, when so many authors are agreed upon that point, it would be presumption in us to doubt their veracity.

Goldsmith, in his *History of England*, thus speaks of him:—"This last named prince, (**Dermot McMorrogh**), a weak, licentious tyrant, had carried off and ravished the daughter of the king of Meath, who, being strengthened by the alliance of the king of Connaught, invaded the ravisher's dominions, and expelled him from his kingdom."—*Pub's*.

CHAPTER V.—*The Idols of many of the Gentile nations—The Idolatry of the Ancient Britons before the time of Christ—Their Priests called Druids—Their Morals—Remarks respecting the Welsh Language.*

BEFORE giving a particular account of the superstition of the ancient Britons, prior to the coming of Christ, it would not be improper to examine, and find out the time that idolatry was first brought into the world. How soon the corrupt nature of man apostatized from the service and worship of the true God, is not certain: but the first objects of his worship were the works of creation. They imagined that the fire, or the wind, or the atmosphere, or the circle of the stars, or the water, or the sun and moon, were the Gods that governed the world. But when the knowledge of the true God was lost, they considered the Sun a god above every thing else. It is said, that Nimrod, the son of Cush, was the first that formed images and idols for the purpose of being worshipped. He had so much respect for his father that he caused his image to be made; and as he was a king clothed with supreme power and authority, he commanded all his subjects to pay the same respect to the image as they did to his father during his life. This agrees with the history we have in the *Wisdom of Solomon*, (Apocrypha,) xiv. 17. "Whom men could not honor in presence because they dwelt far off, they took the counterfeit of his visago from far, and made an express image of a king whom they honored." Nimrod reigned about one hundred and fifty years after the deluge.

The imaginations of men from this time in the choice of their gods were innumerable. "Howbeit every nation made gods of their own." 2 *Kings*, xvii. 20. The god of the Amorites was called Moloch, of which the scripture often speaks. It was a great image of brass; its head was like a bull's head, and its arms spread like the arms of a man.\* It was hollow within, containing seven rooms to receive the sacrifices. The first room was appointed to receive the wheat flour, the second for doves, the third for an ewe, the fourth for a ram, the fifth for a calf, the sixth for an ox; and, if any would offer a son or a daughter, the seventh room was to be

\* *Goodwin's Jewish antiq. Sib. 4, p. 137.*

opened for his or her reception. It is thought that this Moloch is synonymous with Adrammelech, the god of Sepharvaim, mentioned in 2 *Kings*, xvii. 31, and with Baal, spoken of in *Jer.* xix. 5.

In India there is a kingdom called Guinea, the country of the negroes, where to this day they worship serpents\*—a species of harmless snake, streaked alternately with yellow and brindled colors. It happened, about thirty years ago, that a disorderly hog coveted the flesh of one of these snakes, and killed and ate it. When this came to the knowledge of the king and the high priest, words are too weak to set forth their astonishment. Their rage was aroused not only against the offending hog, but against the entire breed and generation; and, had it not been that the king himself was fond of pork, every hog in the country would have been destroyed. In other parts of India, the inhabitants worship the tooth of an animal called in the Welsh language *Ab*. When the Christians took this tooth from them, in the year 1554, they offered a cart-load of gold, and other valuable presents, for its restoration; but the Christians, following the advice of their bishop, refused to accept the ransom, and burnt the tooth to ashes. In many countries in Africa, cats and toads, and even heads of garlic, are objects of worship and veneration. A great portion of the inhabitants of China (a very extensive and fertile country in the East) are particularly ignorant in their mode of worship. When they grow tired of supplicating their images, they condemn and curse them in such terms as these: "Thou hateful cur, is this the way you treat us? Consider in what a magnificent temple we have placed you—how beautifully we have decorated you with gold and precious stones, and to what extent we offer sacrifices unto you! What acknowledgment do you make, you ugly creature, for all these favors?" They will then bind the image with ropes, and drag it indignantly through the streets, as a punishment for not listening to and answering their prayers. If, however, in the course of this infliction, they obtain the object of their supplications, they return the idol to its place in the temple, having first washed and cleansed it. They will then bow before it in a very humble and submissive manner, and thus address it: "It is indeed true that

\* *Bosman's Hist. of Guinea*, 7, p. 185.

we were too hasty when we acted so disrespectfully towards you : but were you not blameable for being so obstinate ? Would it not have been better, had you been more indulgent at first, than to suffer such disrespect ?”\* In another province in China, prior to engaging in any work of importance, a priest will lie on his face on the bare floor before the image, stretching out his hands and feet ; another above him will be reading in a book, and these around them ringing the bells and making a noise. At this time, a spirit appears to possess the first : he suddenly rises from his prostrate position, and answers, like a wizard, every question which is asked him. A learned and pious man has remarked, “ However great the foolishness of these heathens may be, there are some, called Christians, who act as wildly and unreasonably as they do.”†

[An allusion is here made to certain forms in the worship of one of the most respectable sects of the present day. We omit it from a belief that, whatever may have been their practice in the time of the author, they do not now, to use his own words, “ exclaim dreadfully against every thing that is orderly, beautiful, regular, and reasonable.”]

We will now refer to the idol worship of the Britons anterior to the birth of Christ. Their devices were as wild, in this respect, as those of other gentile nations ; for the objects of their adoration, amongst other earthly things, were high hills and rivers,‡ in addition to images which were “ the workmanship of their own hands.” I do not know for what reason they worshipped mountains and rivers, unless, indeed, they believed that some living spirit penetrated through the visible world—seeing that it is by grain and other products of the earth, together with the water of the rivers, that our lives are sustained. Some are of opinion, that the ancient Welsh, whilst on their journey through Asia from the Tower of Babel, beheld mount Sinai trembling and flaming to the skies, when God delivered the Ten Commandments to the Jews ; and that they were so impressed by the sight, that a high hill was ever afterwards held by them in honor and veneration. They also think that they considered rivers sa-

\* *Leguat's Adventures*, p. 205.

† *Dr. Moore's Div. Dial. N. 3*, p. 217.

‡ *Gild. p. 7*,

cred in common with the generally received opinion of other gentile nations, who imagined that there was something of the nature of the Deity in water.\*

When we reflect how sensible and intelligent the priests were, (as we shall prove hereafter,) we cannot but be astonished at the ignorance which prevailed amongst the common people. We may suppose, however, that they did not pray to the images themselves, but to the false gods whom they represented.† Julius Cæsar, who wrote before the birth of Christ, says that they acknowledged and worshipped the same gods, and held the same sentiments in relation to the authority and office of each, as the Romans did; and, further, that they had various images to honor, similar to those which the Romans received from Greece and Italy.

The idol gods to whom the ancient Britons, like the rest of the gentile nations in Europe and part of Asia, paid their adoration, were Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, and Mercury (in particular.) Besides these, there were many others, whose names need not here be mentioned. The names of some of their goddesses were Rhea, Juno, and Venus. These were the appellations of mere mortals, possessing the common passions and frailties of human nature; but they had been famous in their day and generation, and tradition, which delighted in whatever was marvellous, had stripped them of their earthly characters, and deified them. The general credence which was given to this tradition was of great advantage to the nobility; for it enabled them to retain their authority. A law was enacted for the purpose of maintaining and spreading this erroneous opinion, and to prevent any discredit being attached to it. In order further to confirm this belief in the minds of the people, the seven planets, and also the days of the week, were named after the most celebrated of these mock deities; as Sunday,† Monday,‡ Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday.

\* *Camd. p. 555 Ed. Noviss.*

† *Deum maxime Mercurium colunt: hujus sunt plurima simulacra—Post hunc Apollinem, et Martem, et Jovem, et Minervam. De his eandem fore quam reliquæ gentes habent opinionem. Caes. l. 6, p. 107. ‡ Apollo qui et Sol appellatur.*

‡ *Diana quæ etiam Luna nuncupatur.*



Were I to say that these gods, which were worshipped in Europe and Asia in these early times of ignorance, were Britons, I know that some would be ready to ridicule, and call it an idle assertion; but, because I have the authority of truth to support me, I boldly assert that they were Welsh—Saturn was a Welshman, Jupiter was a Welshman, Mercury was a Welshman, and the rest were Welshmen.

I do not say that they were Welsh from this country: I know better; but they were the descendants of Gomer, of the same blood as our Welsh, and spoke the same language. And indeed, if we take particular notice of these names, it will appear evident of what nation they were; for they are neither Latin nor Greek, but pure Welsh. Sadwrn (Saturn) is a man with a strong arm to wage war, the true name is *Sawddwrn*: his wife is called Rhea, and in genuine Welch—*Rhiain* signifying a dame or lady. Their son is called Jupiter, and in real Welsh *Jou* or *Jefan*, because he was the youngest of his father's sons. His wife's name was Juno—that is, *Joan* or *Suan*. Mars, or Mavors, was the false god that assisted in war, as was supposed: his Welsh name is *Mawr-rwysg*, signifying great pomp. Mercury was the god of journeys, & his true name is *Marchwr*, a horseman. Apollo was the god who imparted wisdom to men, and his true name was *Ap-y-Pwyll*, or, as the old people said, the *Poell* (rational or considerate.) Diana was the goddess of chastity and honesty: her true name *Dianaf* (perfect, without defect.) Venus was the goddess of love: her name at first was *Gwen* \* (white.) If any one thinks that these are fabricated stories, let him read the learned Dr. Pezron,† a man from Brittany in France; and if he can answer his reasons and his authorities, (a task that no one has been able yet to perform,) it will be well: otherwise, let no one find fault with me.

So much for their gods. Their priests were formerly called Druids or *Derwyddon*, because, like other nations about Jerusalem, they sacrificed to their idols in groves, and especially under thick oaks. (See *Ezekiel* vi. 13. *Hos.* iv. 13.) The Druids were learned men, of extensive knowledge, and were

\* *Roll. Mon. Antiq.* p. 43. \* *Hist. Nat.* c. 14-15.

judges in matters of dispute and contention, as well as priests in things pertaining to religion.

Thus, being judges and priests, it is natural to infer that they were the chief men in the kingdom; and their decision was considered so impartial and just that the greatest lord in the kingdom was bound to abide by it: and if any one was so obstinate as to refuse to submit, he would be excommunicated immediately, and his society shunned as if he was afflicted with the plague. It was the Druids who wrote the histories of the lives of their kings, and every thing remarkable that happened on sea or land, or even in the firmament; but they did not commit to writing any of the doctrines and sciences which they taught their disciples, lest they should become common and be made light of. Their young men studied astronomy, the courses of the planets, the dimensions of the globe, the wonderful formation of every member of the bodies of men and beasts, the nature and species of vegetables, and, in short, every thing appertaining to philosophy. They maintained the immortality of the soul; but here they made a grand mistake, for they believed that the soul after parting from the body of a man, went to reside in that of some other person.\* They preached and enforced this doctrine with solemnity, inciting their hearers to courage, sobriety, and morality, and persuading them that their souls in the next age would dwell in princes, lords, &c. Whether they were wizards or not, I do not know; but it is certain that the common people thought they were, as appears from an old proverb—"No one knows except God, and the wizards of the world, and the diligent Druids. They doubtless took great pains to teach the sciences to their disciples, as they did not consider any fit to teach others until they had studied fifteen or even twenty years. Besides other things, they taught them to commit to memory and recite thousands and thousands of stanzas and sonnets of poetry. It was the opinion of Mr. Edward Lloyd, (and I do not know who could be cited as better authority,) that the *Englyn Miler* was the metre they chiefly used in these stanzas. It is said that the Druids furnished their disciples with a sort of glass rings called *glain nadroedd*, which they sold to the common people who wore them as charms or preservatives from misfortunes. It was a source of no small

\* Non interire animas, sed ab alijs post mortem transire ad alios. Cæs. L. 6. p. 107.

joy to the Druids to find an oak with Mistletoe\* growing on it, as they considered this a token of the favor of the gods. Their ceremonies on these occasions were, 1st. To come to the tree, singing as they came, when the moon was six days old; 2d. A priest would climb the tree, and cut the shrub with a golden bill-hook, while others on the ground would receive it in a white apron; 3d. Two white oxen, without blemish, were offered in a consecrated place; and such a sacrifice was considered as a most excellent charm or preservative from poison, pestilence and barrenness.†

But sacrifices best calculated to please the gods, as they thought, were malefactors, who by the laws of their country were condemned to die, such as murderers and thieves. They were kept as prisoners in a sort of a stone chest (these are yet to be seen in many places in Wales,) until they found a convenient time to call the whole country together to see them sacrificed. The stone chest above mentioned is a wall or hiding-place made of six stones, one for a bottom, seven or eight feet long—one on each side, one at each end, and another large stone for a cover. The house of Illtud on the top of a hill in Llan Hammwleh, near Brecon, is a stone chest of this description: similar ones existed, and perhaps do yet exist, at the following places—Carn Llechart, in the parish of Llangyfelach, in Glamorganshire; Gwaly Filast, in the parish of Llanboidy, below Carmarthen; Gronlech, in the parish of Nyfern, in Pembrokeshire; Llech yr-Ast, in the parish of Llangoedmar, near Cardigan; Cerrig-y-Gwyddel, in the parish of Llangristiolis, in Anglesea; Carchar-Cynrig rhwth, in the parish of Cerig drudion, in Denbighshire, and many other places with which I am not acquainted.

Now, when there were many malefactors condemned, the Druids would cause an image to be made of the boughs of trees of an amazing size, and of the shape of a man with his hands and feet spread and made fast in the ground near some heap of stones, like a hobgoblin. The prisoners were then brought from the stone chests, tied fast with ropes here and there to these images, and fires were immediately kindled be-

\* *Viscus quercinus*.

† *Samme's Britann. Antiq. Vol. 1. C. 7. p. 101. Plin. l. 16. Cap. 44.*

neath these images, and the malefactors were roasted alive. These were the sacrifices, as they believed, with which the gods were best pleased.\* Sometimes, indeed, when there were only one or two, they were sacrificed on an altar near the stone chest, and but few of them are now to be found, but partial ruins of an altar are to be found near it.

On the night of the last of April, a fire was kindled on all the heaps where these sacrifices had been made throughout the Island, where one of the Druids and the people of that neighborhood sacrificed to the paternal gods, in order to obtain their blessing upon the fruit and other products of the earth; and, on the night of the last of October, the same services were repeated, as a token of gratitude for the abundance with which they had been favored. On these occasions, it was the duty of every family to extinguish the the fires on their hearths, and re-kindle them with a coal from the sacrificial fires: those who refused to comply were excommunicated.

The old Druids made their residence in the island of Anglesea, in preference to all other places in the kingdom. Some relicts of their religious ceremonies are yet to be seen, although fast going to decay; and amongst the rest, many of their stone chests, and the ruins of their altars. The names of several of the places there remind us of the old occupiers, such as *Tre'r dryw*, (Wren's town) in the district of Mene, *Bod y Druidion*, *Bod-owyr*, a *Thre'r Beirdd*. In *Tre'r-dryw*, the head or chief of the Druids resided; for they had one to whom they looked as their head, like the Pope or the high-priest. In the place called *Bod y Druidion* was the city of the Druids—the second in authority: at *Bod-owyr*, philosophers and scientific characters resided, whose principal study was medicine: and at *Tre' Beirdd* dwelt the poets who sang the histories of the most celebrated of their ancestors.

So much respecting the Druids. We have already given a description of the neatness of the chariots of the Britons, and of their skill and bravery in war. They could read and write at least a thousand years before the birth of Christ. It is probable that they were much better acquainted with the fine arts and the sciences than is now generally believed; and

\* *Cass. de Bell. Gall. L. 6. p. 107.*

it is certain that they had a knowledge of many things of which we in this enlightened age are entirely ignorant. They had in use a kind of mill, which turned without the propelling motion of either wind or water. During the last century, the shaft of a mill was found at *Bryn-y-Castell*, in Edeir-nion, which consisted of eight iron squares, as thick as a man's thigh, with a knot on one end—being the place, apparently, where the wheel had been; the other end was eaten up by rust. In the same place was found, also, a millstone, about three feet in diameter. It is said that one-fourth of that mill was of iron, and the remainder of wood; and that by the aid of the loadstone or adamant, or perhaps both, which were in some way or other connected with it, it would turn *per se*, when properly fixed.\* Their coin was in general made of brass, with rings of iron: it is certain, however, that they had both gold and silver coin. In the parish of Penbryn, ancient British coin has been found, which contained no inscription, except strange and uncouth figures, the signification of which could not be ascertained.† Some specimens of the coin which were struck during the reign of Cassibelanus, who contended so long and so resolutely against Julius Cæsar, are still extant.‡

The apparel of the ancient Britons, during the winter season, (for, except when the frost and snow were very severe, they went naked,) consisted of the skins of deer, wild bulls, and other animals; and the light clothing with which they adorned themselves was made of white woollen cloth, fringed all over, but not fullled: indeed, it is uncertain whether the art of fulling was then discovered. This was the dress of the common people; but the gentry wore tab-ards§ or tabbys,|| reaching to the ground, with wreaths of

\* *Dav. Lexic. sub Brenan.*

† *Lloyd Annot. in Camd. p. 697.*

‡ We believe that these specimens, together with those of coins of almost every nation, ancient and modern, are preserved in the British Museum, in London, where antiquarians and others who are desirous of viewing them, are permitted to indulge their curiosity.  
Pub's.

§ *A loose garment, or the badge of a bard.*

|| *A sort of waved silk. See Walter's English Welsh Dictionary.*

gold, of very cunning workmanship, on both sides of the neck and on the wrists. This was the customary dress of queen Boadicea—that intrepid heroine who, in the year 62, headed an army of the Britons against the Romans, when seventy thousand of her brave followers were put to the sword. On this occasion, she had on a tabard of waved silk, with a golden wreath around her neck: her auburn hair spread loosely over her shoulders, and extended to her feet. One of these wreaths was found by some persons engaged in digging in a garden, near Harlech, in Merionethshire, in 1692.

It is evident that the Britons must have understood smith-work, when they could make such articles as the wreaths above mentioned: the neatness of their chariots proves that they were skilful in joinery and all kinds of wood work: and that they were excellent masons is testified by their villages, the walls of their towns and cities, and the palaces of their kings and nobles. There were in the kingdom twenty-eight walled cities, in each of which a Druid resided, who was judge of a certain district. It is not known with certainty where all these cities were located; but London, Worcester, Oxford, Gloucester, Carleon in Monmouthshire, and Carmarthen, were amongst the number. I am aware that some affirm that the Britons had no walled cities before the Roman invasion. The buildings of the common people were mere huts, formed of plaited rods plastered with mud, having a hole through the middle for a chimney; and there are many of the same description still to be seen in Wales. But no one can prove from old histories that there were no other buildings in ancient times. If there had not been, Julius Cæsar would never have said, *Hominum est infinita multitudo, creberrimaque ædificia fere Gallicis consimilia*.\*

Their skill in painting was remarkable, particularly that species of it which was displayed on their own bodies, and was descriptive of the various forms of birds, beasts, fishes, and reptiles. These representations formed a considerable part of the ornaments of the gentry, and were visible “from

\* *Commen. l. 1, p. 79.* Anglice, *There is a vast multitude of people, very thickly settled, and living in houses similar to those of the Gauls.*

the crowns of their heads to the soles of their feet." The color chiefly used in these decorations was blue: it would never wear out, as it was let into the flesh by perforating the skin. Whether this mode of painting their bodies had the effect of rendering them healthier, or less liable to disease than they would otherwise have been, I am unable to determine; but it is a well known fact, that it was a common occurrence amongst them to live to the advanced age of a hundred and forty years.\* According to the opinion of Mr. Camden, this practice gave the island the name of Britain, or *Brithania*, (as it was first called,) which means the country of the spotted men.†

Mr. Camden was certainly a very learned man, but, on this point, it would have been better if he had suffered his imagination to sleep, rather than give birth to such an opinion. The truth is, however, he was desirous of making himself conspicuous by the invention of some new doctrine, contrary to popular belief: with this wish in his heart, he set his wits to work, and very soon concocted the foolish notion above referred to, which has neither sense nor reason to support it.

It is very probable that, in the science of medicine, the ancient Britons were more proficient than their descendants of the present day, notwithstanding all our boasted superiority in learning and general acquirements. Their remedies for diseases were made exclusively from herbs, and they effected more cures, in proportion to the number of sick persons, than can be done with all the compositions that are now in vogue.‡

\* *Vide Uss. Primord. p. 885.*

† The reader will have perceived, on reading this work thus far, that several repetitions are introduced. We cannot see the propriety of them; and would willingly have omitted the most conspicuous: but we feared that those who might compare the translation with the original, would charge us with wandering from the assertion made in our preface, that "great care had been taken to preserve, as nearly as possible, the spirit of the original."—*Pub's.*

‡ Were this passage to meet the eye of some individuals with whom we are acquainted, they would give the author credit for his assertion, and express their hearty concurrence in his opinion. It will not, however, be considered as any reflection upon the faculty of our day, when it is remembered that this history was first published early in the 18th century.—*Pub's.*

The most celebrated physicians of these middle ages were those of Myddfai—RHIWALLON and his sons, CADWGAN, GRUFFYDD, and EINION, who flourished early in the thirteenth century, and were contemporary with RHYS GRUG. There is a small volume still extant, said to be composed by them, which concludes with the following sentence: "If a man will not eat when he has an appetite, his stomach will become inflated with an unhealthy substance, which will cause his head to ache."

A fiddle and a harp were the principal instruments of music in use amongst the old people. They commonly played a ballad called *Symlen-ben-bys*. The young men learnt to play at first upon strings of hair, and, when they had completed their studies in the art, they had to pay twenty-four pence\* for their instruction; for so the law provided: "He that lays aside a harp with hair strings, being a finished player, ought to pay twenty-four pence."†

The ancient Britons were in the habit of shaving every part of their bodies, with the exception of the head and the upper lip. Their food consisted principally of milk and meat. They would not eat the flesh of hares, geese, or fowls, although they had an abundance of them. Many of them were engaged in farming. They manured their land with marl and sea-sand, and generally raised good crops of wheat and barley, the former of which they made into bread, and the latter into beer. It is evident that they understood the art of brewing, some centuries before the time of Julius Cæsar.

It was customary with them to burn the bodies of their dead, to gather the ashes and the remains of the bones, deposit them in earthen pots, and bury them in rows in large mounds of earth, some of which remain unremoved to the present time. There is a remarkable one in the parish of Trelech, Carmarthenshire, known by the name of *Crug-y Deyrn*.

Their altars, upon which human beings were sometimes sacrificed, are still visible. The victims thus immolated

\* About forty-three cents.

† This was a large sum in those days, especially for a fiddler.



were malefactors or prisoners taken in war. One of these altars is to be seen in the parish of Nyfern, in Penbrokeshire : it is called *Ilech y Drybedd*. The upper stone, or the altar, is twelve yards in circumference ; and on the north side is a mortice to carry away the blood of the victim. Wherever three large stones are to be seen fixed on their ends in the ground, like the feet of a brandiron or stool, it is likely that there was once an altar erected.

There is an old tradition among the Welsh people of an animal called in Welsh *Afanc y Llyn* (in English *Castor*) and also of twin oxen of an amazing size. As to the *Afanc*, it is the common opinion that he was a kind of a large water-dog, with a broad tail, called a Beaver. It is a crafty, cunning animal, and yet quite innocent. Some of these animals were doubtless in the river Teifs in the time of Giraldus, Archdeacon of Brecknock, who wrote the history of Wales about the year 1189. It is, however, strange that such a story as the following is now prevalent respecting him. Tradition says that he was a monster of uncommon size, and that when taken and fastened with an iron chain, nothing but the twin oxen could drag him out of the water. I would therefore conclude that the *Afanc y Llyn* is the Alligator, or a kind of Crocodile, a very dangerous animal, of an amazing size, which will swallow a man entire, as it has sometimes happened. About the year 1739, one of them swallowed three men in less than a quarter of an hour. This frightful animal is very common in the rivers and lakes in Africa and America ; and who can tell but some of them were formerly in the lakes in Wales ? In former times, wolves were common in this country, but at the present day there is not one in the island ; and, if the *Afanc* is the Crocodile, it is probable that it was by destroying some such frightful monster as this, that the twin oxen were made use of ; and that they effected his destruction by drawing him out of the river, to the great joy of the whole country.

The old Welsh language continued unmixed and uncorrupted until of late years. This cannot be said with propriety of any other language, except of that of the Jews and the Arabians. It is not easy to understand the Welsh language fully without also having some knowledge of the Hebrew,

Latin, Greek, and Irish, for these four languages are closely connected with the Welsh. 1st. Of the Hebrew, there are many words that have found their way into our's, notwithstanding the confusion at the tower of Babel, such as the following: *Achen, anndon, bwth, cad, caer, ceg, cefn, coppa, cylllell, golwyth, magwyr, neuadd, olyn, potten, tal, tammen*; in English, Genealogy, perjury, booth, battle, mouth, back, top, knife, collop, wall, hall, kiln, paunch, tall, dung-hill; with a multitude of others, between which and the Welsh there is little or no difference. 2d. As to the Latin, there is such a multitude of words in our language and that of the old Italians, having the same sound and meaning, that a person might think the two nations were of the same origin. That our ancestors borrowed many of their words, during their dominion in Britain, no sensible man will deny. It is likely, however, that the Italians had borrowed from our ancestors, when, as yet, they were comparatively an insignificant people, and the Britons were their masters. This is certainly true, and is confirmed by their own history. 3d. As to the Greeks, it is no wonder that there is so much similarity between their language and the Welsh, when it is considered that Brutus was a Greek, or that, at least, he was not a Welshman. The same letters that our ancestors at first made use of were also the characters used by the Greeks, as is testified by Julius Cæsar. 4th. As to the Irish, I have already shewn that they and the Welsh were the same people, from the same original stock; and it is impossible fully to understand the names of our rivers, mountains, forests, villages, &c. without understanding the Irish language.

It is true that there are many words in the Welsh language having the same sound and meaning as corresponding words in the English; and, of late, English words have multiplied upon us. It is, however, a mistake to think that it is from the English we have had all the words that are of the same sound and signification as those in the English language; for the English, or Saxons, were many years in the service of the Britons, until they proved treacherous; and it is natural to suppose that, during this time, they borrowed many words from their masters. The following are a few out of many of them: *Byclan, borgen, cap, culpen, cost, crefft, crwper, cwcwallt, ceispwl, cwpl, curpan, cweryl, dart, egr, ffael, ffair, ffot, grau, gronyn, happus, hap, het, hittia, inge,*

*tifrai, llewpard, malais, macr, pert, plas, siwrnai, siop, tasc, tafern, twr, tiler, ystryd.\** All these words, with many more, are to be found in the writings of Dafydd ap Gwilym, an eminent poet who wrote about the year 1380. Few persons in his time took any delight in speaking the English language, although they were well acquainted with the Latin, the Greek, and the Hebrew; and it is doubtful whether the poet just mentioned, or any priest or gentleman, or man of learning, in that age, understood the English language, as we may naturally infer from the following remarkable relation: "A nobleman from the island of Anglesea, named OWEN TUDOR, was married to queen CATHARINE, who was formerly the wife of HENRY V., king of England. As Catharine had been raised in France, she knew no difference between the Welsh and the English people, until she married Owen Tudor. Shortly after her marriage, she expressed a strong desire to see a number of her husband's countrymen, in order that she might ascertain whether they were such worthless people as the English represented them to be. About this time, Owen Tudor and his queen were taken prisoners at Chester. Owen sent for several of his kinsmen, and especially for two dignified gentlemen, who were nearly related and very dear to him. These were JORWERTH AP MEREDYTH and HOWEL LLEWELYN. Nearly one hundred of the principal gentlemen in Wales visited him on this occasion, who, although they were honorable and learned men, could not speak a word of English; for, when the queen addressed them in French and English, they could not answer her. This caused her to remark, that they were the most sprightly, gay dumb creatures she had ever seen." It is easy to infer from this, that the most polished classes in Wales were at this period totally unacquainted with the English language. This was about the year 1430. It is therefore certain that the words above mentioned, selected from the poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym, are genuine Welsh, from which language they were undoubtedly borrowed by the English. That very learned Welshman, Dr. DAVIES, acknowledges these and many other words to be of Welsh origin.

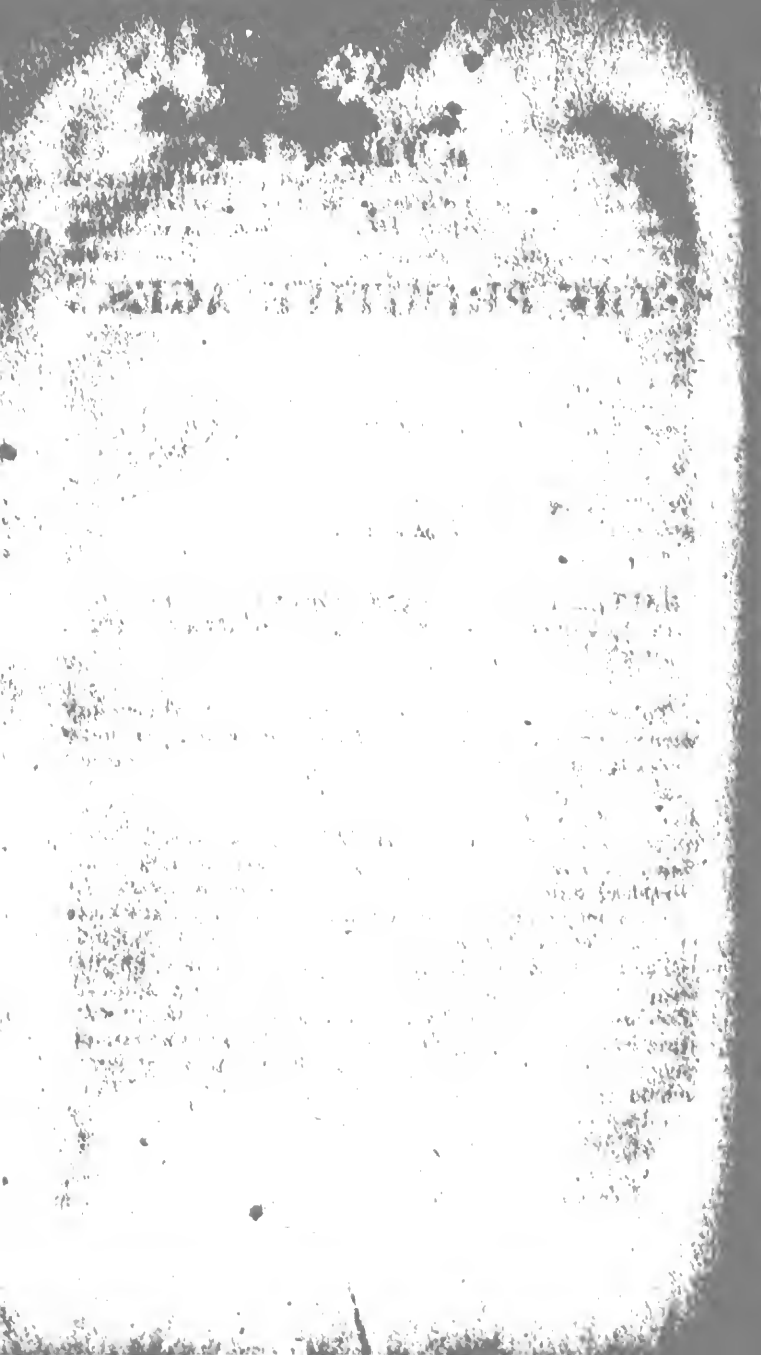
\* In English, Buckles, bargain, cap, captain, cost, craft, crupper, cuckold, catchpole, couple, cup, quarrel, dart, eager, fail, false, fair, fool, grain, happy, hap, hat, ink, livery, leopard, malice, mayor, port, palace, journey, shop, task, tavern, tower, tilor, street.

This, however, bears no comparison to the multitude of words which the English have at various periods borrowed from other languages, in order to enrich their own, which is now almost perfect. A large portion of it is French, interspersed with a few words of old English.\* The chronicle says: "In the time of William the Conqueror, there was not one English officer in the country: indeed, it was considered a reproach to be called an Englishman, or to form a connection by marriage with one of that nation; because they were very much and very generally disliked. From this it is evident that, at that time, all the leading men in England were either Normans or French, or descendants of the ancient Britons. Hence arose the proverb, "Jack would be a gentleman, but he can speak no French."

It is true that a great many technical terms, peculiar to the law, have been obsolete since king Howel's code was discontinued. The majority of his laws remained in force until the time of HENRY VIII., who was a great grandchild of Owen Tudor, of Anglesea. As it respects common matters, however, the language is nearly as pure and intelligible as it was twelve hundred years ago, as will appear from a comparison with the poetry of Taliesin, written about A.D. 540; of Aneurin Gwawdrydd, written A.D. 550; of Myrddin Wyllt, written A.D. 570; and of Llywarch Hen, written A.D. 590.

\* Since this work was first published, we presume, a great number of the ancient English words of which the author here speaks have become obsolete. There is one word, in particular, which is undoubtedly of English derivation, but is never heard in England, (at least, in its original sense,) except in the county of York, and there it passes current only amongst the uneducated portion of the community. It is true it appears in the dictionaries, without even the common mark prefixed to words 'not in use;' but, beyond the limits we have mentioned, it is not known as an English word. It is the word **ADDLE**, 'to earn.' There are doubtless many other words, with which we are unacquainted; but we single this out from amongst the rest, as having fallen under our own observation.—PUB'S.





# A VIEW OF THE PRIMITIVE AGES.

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## PART II.

### CHAPTER I.—*Respecting the preaching of the Gospel throughout the world, particularly in Britain; by whom preached, and at what time.*

THE world having been two thousand years without any written law, and having existed two thousand years more under the Mosaic dispensation,\* the “seed of the woman” came to “bruise the serpent’s head,” in the person of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. This age is called, in scripture, the end of the world, (*Heb. ix. 26.*) and the latter times, (*1 Tim. iv. 1.*) It is the age or dispensation of the Gospel to which ST. PAUL refers in these expressions. At the commencement of the Christian era, that remarkable prophecy of Jacob respecting his son Judah was fulfilled: “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come.” *Gen. xlix. 10.* The meaning is, that the supreme government should continue in the tribe of Judah, until Christ the Lord should appear; and that then the sceptre—that is, the royal authority, should cease in that tribe forever. This was all fulfilled in the time of Christ. It was then that Canaan, the country of the Jews, was subdued by AUGUSTUS CÆSAR, who ap-

\* *Vide Uss. Chron. Sac. c. 2, p. 44, &c.*

pointed HEROD as their king. Herod, lest the Jews should rebel against him, put their chief men to death, especially those who were of the royal house of Judah. The providence of God is the more manifest in the fulfilment of this prophecy, inasmuch as it was this tribe alone which returned entire and unbroken from the captivity of Babylon.\* The rest, were scattered amongst the gentiles, and at last became the same people with them.

The Romans had a great temple, which they called the "Temple of Peace." When its foundations were laid, they consulted the Oracle† as to its duration. The Oracle answered, "It will stand until a son is born of a virgin." When they heard this; they were greatly delighted, and danced for joy, imagining that it would endure for ever; but, on the very night that Christ was born, it fell, and became a heap of ruins; and, although it was rebuilt, it was soon afterwards burnt with aerial fire.‡

Augustus Cæsar refused to be called Lord, because the LORD OF LORDS was born into the world, although he was not aware of the circumstance. When he consulted the Oracle respecting an heir to the crown after his death, it is said that he received the following answer :

Hebræus puer injungit, Divum Dominator,  
Hacce domo fugere, et rursum me inferna Subrie ;  
Ergo tacens Aris posthac discedito nostris.§

A Hebrew youth, whom every god obeys,  
Commands me hence into the shades below ;  
Whilst silence, then, this Oracle displays,  
Let not your footsteps near our altars go.

\* *Juda sola emersit e captivitate, &c. Spanhem. Dub. Evan. p. 244.*

† *A sort of sanctuary image supposed to possess the spirit of divination.*

‡ *Turs. Hist. p. 202.*

§ This is one of the many passages in the writings of the Roman poets, which are believed by some to have a direct reference to our Saviour. Whether they had or not, we of course cannot say; but, whilst we give credit to those who entertain this opinion, we beg leave respectfully to differ from them, although we should probably find some difficulty in convincing them of their error.—*Pub's.*



The news of the miracles performed by our Lord was soon spread abroad, not only in and about Jerusalem, but through all the surrounding country ; and many of the gentry or leaders of the people greatly desired to see him. Herod 'was exceeding glad when he saw Jesus; for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him, and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.' *Luke xxiii. 8.* Zaccheus also, who was the chief among the publicans, and a man of wealth, climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see him. *Luke xix. 2, 3, 4.* Such miracles as our Lord performed had never before been heard of, since the foundation of the world. This caused many of the wise men of the gentiles to seek him diligently. Amongst others, an illustrious chief wrote to an assembly of great men at Rome, to the following effect: "There hath appeared in these days a man of great virtue, named JESUS CHRIST, who is still living. The people account him a prophet, but his disciples call him the SON OF GOD. He raises the dead, and brings them to life, and heals all manner of sickness and disease. He is of a handsome personal appearance. His hair is of a light red color, straight, reaching to his ears; from thence, downwards, it is somewhat curly, and of a lighter color, spreading about his shoulders, and parted on the top of his head, according to the custom of the Nazarenes. His forehead is smooth, his face fair and without spot, and his mouth and nose so comely that they cannot be equalled. His beard is the same color as his hair: it is not long, but pointed. His eyes are blue and keen: his looks spiritual and intelligent. He is severe in his reproofs, kind and tender in his exhortations. His discourses are delightful, and delivered with solemnity. No one remembers to have seen him laugh, but many have seen him weep. In short, he is a man who excelleth all others in the comeliness and beauty of his person, and the just and regular proportion of every member of his body."

About the year 1719, there was found at a place called *Bryngwyn*, in the island of Anglesea, amidst of a heap of stones, a coin of brass, having a representation of Jesus

Christ on one side, according with the foregoing description ; and, on the other, "This is Jesus Christ the Mediator."\*

In the eighteenth year of the reign of TIBERIUS CÆSAR, Jesus Christ suffered for the sin of the world. It is thought he was about thirty-four years of age. Pilate was desirous of releasing him ; but the Jews cried out, "If you let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend." He then delivered him to them to be crucified. Pilate was afraid that the government of Judea would be taken from him, if Cæsar should hear that he had spared Jesus, who was accused of an intention to become the king of the Jews—although our blessed saviour had no desire of becoming a temporal king ; for he told them that his kingdom was "not of this world." But, with all the anxiety and cunningness of Pilate to continue himself in office, he soon afterwards lost the good will and favor of his master, and was banished by the command of Cæsar to a strange country : where, under the sorrows of his heart and the stings of a guilty conscience, he stabbed himself with a dagger, and, like Judas, "went to his own place."

The Jews also were obliged to drink a full cup of the indignation of the Lord against them ; for, in forty years after the sufferings of Christ, at the feast of Passover, (at which time they sacrificed the Lord of Life) when all the inhabitants of Judea had come from far and near to sacrifice at the temple in Jerusalem, (as they were wont to do once every year,) TITUS VESPASIAN, emperor of Rome, came with an army against their devoted city. There were in Jerusalem at that time more than two millions of people. The almost innumerable multitude would have been able to face all their enemies, if they had been unanimous and at peace with each other : but behold them, by the righteous judgment of God, at variance with each other ! They considered not the public good. One party was arrayed against another, (for the city was divided into many parties,) all of whom were continually murdering and burning each other without mercy. The Romans had but little more to do than to keep them within the city. The different parties went on murdering each other in the most cruel manner : indeed, such was the slaughter, that a person could scarcely walk the streets on account of the

\* *Rel. Mon. Antiq.* p. 52.

dead carcasses which choked up the way ; and the stench was as strong as deadly poison.

Besides this, the famine was so severe that they were obliged to eat old shoes, and the offensive and putrid carcasses of the dead ; and, even worse than this, (horrible as it is to relate,) " The hands of pitiful women have sodden their own children." *Lam. iv. 10.* This is testified by their own countryman JOSEPHUS,\* who was an eye witness to what he relates. On account of the severity of the famine, thousands and thousands of them escaped secretly out of the city ; but then the Romans arrested and detained them. The commander of the Roman army, Titus Vespasian, was naturally a mild, meek man ; but at this time, when the Jews had neither favor with God nor man, he commanded all who escaped from Jerusalem to be crucified. Thousands of them were thus executed,—sometimes as many as five hundred in a day, for many days together, until there was no more room to erect crosses, nor a sufficiency of wood to make new ones. Thus those who cried earnestly against Christ, " Crucify him," &c. were at length filled to satiety with their own devices and inventions.

Our Lord foresaw these days when he said, " Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time—no, nor ever shall be." *Matt. xxiv. 21.* Let the reader imagine that he sees Jerusalem surrounded with a mighty army, and the citizens within murdering one another like infuriated fiends—the streets filled with dead carcasses, bathed in all manner of impurities : let him imagine that he smells the stench, and feels the vapor arising, with force enough to poison all who come out of their houses : let him think that he sees the inhabitants burning and destroying barns and all manner of food that had been prepared for the support of man : let him try to portray to himself the sight of a survivor wading to his knees in the blood and filth of these dead bodies—ay, and compelled to eat them, to satisfy the voracious cravings of his appetite : in a word, let him imagine that he hears the cries, lamentations, and groans, in every corner of the unhappy city, and that neither God nor man shews any compassion upon the sufferers. Let a man

\* *Jos. de Bell. Jud. Lib. 7. C. 8.*

think, I say, that he witnesses all this, and much more, and he will then doubtless conclude that the tribulations were great, "such as were not since the beginning of the world to that time—no, nor ever shall be."

But in the midst of all this massacre, murder, and burning, there was not so much as one christian there to suffer the least affliction. The christians had all withdrawn to a village not far off, and were as safe as Lot was at Zoar when Sodom and Gomorrah were in flames, and the wicked inhabitants were roasting alive in the midst of fire and brimstone. *Gen. xix.* Thus, when the arm of the Lord was stretched out in judgment against the whole nation of the Jews—while the pestilence, the sword, and the famine were sweeping off thousands of them every day, the Christians, by the favor and goodness of God, were secure and without fear—relying upon the strong arm of the Almighty.

When we read in scripture of the disciples wondering at the beauty and magnificence of the temple at Jerusalem, Christ tells them, that "there should not be left one stone upon another that should not be thrown down." There was no building in the world that could be compared with the temple when our Saviour made this remark. The prophecy was fulfilled; for, when the Romans had conquered and subdued Jerusalem, although Titus did all he could to save the temple, yet God had ordained otherwise. Notwithstanding the beauty of its sculpture, and the brightness of its precious stones, it was burnt to ashes; and Jerusalem, which had been so lately considered the queen of the cities of the world, was flaming awfully to the skies, and thousands of its wicked inhabitants consuming in the midst of it.

Historians say that one million of the Jews, of all ages and degrees, lost their lives, either by fire, or the sword, or by famine, during this siege. Tens of thousands of them, especially of those who were under twenty years of age, were sent as slaves to all parts of the world: they were driven entirely out of their own country, and from that day to this they have never had possession or authority therein. They were esteemed as little better than beasts. The flesh of a Jew was so contemptible, and of so little value, that we read of thirty of them sold for one penny—yea, like rejected goods

worth little or nothing, the Romans offered them for sale as slaves to all countries, and the remnant of those who were left alive were scattered over the face of the world, until they had no city, no home, no government of their own, but were a bye-word amongst the nations.\*

I shall conclude this melancholy account with one small addition. About three hundred years after the sufferings of Christ, a wicked man of the name of JULIAN attempted to restore the Jews to their own country. This man had once professed to be a Christian, but he denied the faith, and became a pagan, and is therefore called JULIAN the APOSTATE. This man, out of malice to the Christians, gave the Jews all possible encouragement to set up anew the law of Moses, and to repair or rebuild the temple at Jerusalem; but it would have been as easy for him to climb to heaven upon his feet, as to try to keep up what God would cast down. To work, however, they went with great resolution. Such was their zeal and anxiety to finish the work, that the females assisted them with all their might; but, after much difficulty and fatigue, the Almighty sent an earthquake, which overthrew the whole work, and all the mechanics who were engaged in it were cut off by the righteous judgment of God, for their presumption.

\* Attempts have been made, of late years, to re-establish the Jews in their ancient city of Jerusalem—not by the power of the sword, but by the power of wealth. The leading monied men of that race, in Europe, including Baron Rothschild and others equally eminent, have had it in contemplation to purchase the site of the present city of Jerusalem, with the intention of providing a home for the descendants of Jacob, and of commingling together in one mass the various sects of the Jewish people which he scattered throughout the world. Whether the calling together of the Jews, and the re-modelling of their ancient forms of government, will be effected through this means, it is difficult and, indeed, impossible to say; but of this we are assured—the Jews will one day or other (and we believe the time is not far distant) be exalted again to their former rank amongst the nations of the earth, and be the favored people of the Lord. The endeavors made in the British Parliament, to remove the disabilities under which they lie in England, will, if effectual, lead to similar measures of redress in other parts of Europe; and we may hail the first signal of success as the dawn of a bright and glorious day, which shall disenthral the nation of God's own choice, and place them where they might now have been, but for their obstinacy and unbelief—in the very first rank in the scale of nations.—*Pub'e.*

It might naturally have been supposed that the Jews would have taken warning by such evident manifestations of the Almighty's power and vengeance ; but stubbornness is the peculiar characteristic of that race. They did not see the hand that smote them, but, with a blindness approaching to infatuation, they considered these calamities as rather the results of accident, than as the punishment due for their crimes and ingratitude. With this foolish imagination in their hearts, they re-commenced the work, but, whilst they were engaged, a flaming fire burst from under the foundation, and entirely consumed the building, together with all who were employed in its erection.\*

So much for the Jews and their temple. We will now return to the sufferings of our Lord. We are informed (*Luke* xxiii. 44) that "there was darkness over all the earth from the sixth to the ninth hour." It was not a natural eclipse of the sun, (for that can occur only at the time of the new moon,) but an extraordinary display of the power of God. At this time the moon was full, and the occurrence made such an impression upon the minds of many of the Jews and the gentiles, that they acknowledged that Jesus was the Son of God. *Matt.* xxvii. 54. It is said that a celebrated philosopher at Athens, struck by this unusual event, exclaimed, "Either the world is at an end, or the Son of God is suffering." He therefore commanded an altar to be erected, with this inscription: "*To the unknown God.*" It is very probable that this was the altar spoken of by St. Paul, when disputing with the Athenians. *Acts* xvii. At the same time, a wizard from Ireland told his king (in consideration of the darkness) that the Lord of the world was suffering.†

We will now say a few words in relation to the preaching of the Gospel, particularly in the island of Britain. The Apostles did not commence the work of preaching the Gospel to all nations, immediately after the resurrection of Jesus Christ; but, for several years, they confined their ministry exclusively to the Jews—offering for their acceptance the promises and consolations of the New Testament of their Lord and Master. This was in accordance with their instruc-

\* *Sozom. Hist. Eccles. l. 5, c. 21.*

† *Lloyd Irish Dict. in voc.*

tions—"Beginning at Jerusalem." *Luke* xiv. 17. So Paul and Barnabas told them: "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken unto you." *Acts* xiii. 46. As they were in the most wretched condition, (although they were in covenant with God, being the children of Abraham,) so they were favored with the first offers of mercy, which were continually urged upon their attention, year after year, without any intermission, until the persecution spoken of in *Acts* xiii. 46—a period of ten years after the ascension of Christ to the right hand of God. Then, when they had rejected the word of God, and adjudged themselves unworthy of eternal life—when they had turned a deaf ear to the words of exhortation, and laughed at the threatened punishment of their impenitence—when prejudice and unbelief had so blinded their understandings, that they could see no beauty, no loveliness, no sincerity, no hopes of salvation, save in the now obsolete dispensation under which their fathers had worshipped,—the Apostles turned to the gentiles; thus fulfilling the words of the prophet, spoken through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, "I will give thee for a light unto the gentiles." *Isaiah* xlix. 6.

PETER preached to the Jews, especially such of them as were scattered amongst the gentiles in the East; and eventually suffered martyrdom in the city of Rome, being crucified with his head downwards. ANDREW went to Scythia and Achaia. JAMES, the son of Zebedee, was slain by Herod. *Acts* xii. PHILIP travelled towards the West, as far as France, and some say to Britain. PAUL also sojourned in many parts of Europe, and, according to the opinion of many learned men, visited and preached the Gospel in this island. JOHN directed his course to Ephesus. BARTHOLOMEW sailed to Armenia and the adjoining countries. THOMAS went to Ethiopia and Judea. JAMES, the son of Alphaeus, was ordained bishop of Jerusalem, where he remained to feed, to counsel, and console the church of God.

I will now confine myself to the British island. We will inquire, in the first place, at what period the preaching of the Gospel was introduced there, and what success attended its promulgation in the early ages. It is certain that the light of Christianity shed its cheering rays over our country at a very early period; for our countryman, Gildas, speaks very

plainly and decidedly upon the subject. After describing the battle between the Britons, under Boadicea their queen, and the Romans under Paulinus, about the year 61, (as it is related in the first part of this history,) he says: "After a black-frost and a severe winter, Christ, the sun of righteousness, arose, and warmed our country with the rays of his heavenly doctrine; although the chief council of Rome opposed and sought to impede the progress of the Gospel."<sup>2</sup> This is the substance of what Gildas says in relation to this point; and I think it will go far to confirm the assertion above made.

It is evident, from this testimony, that the Gospel was preached in this country as early as the year 62 or 63, at the farthest. It is unnecessary to multiply proofs, by referring to the opinions of other distant authors. Gildas is the most ancient British writer whose works are now extant. The rest place confidence in him, and copy from his writings. Having gone to the fountain head, therefore, we may expect to arrive at the truth, pure and unadulterated.

When Gildas asserts that the Senate of Rome opposed and endeavored to impede the spread of the Gospel, we are to understand that it was a practice amongst the Romans for the governors of the different provinces to inform the Emperor of every extraordinary event which occurred within their jurisdiction. Hence, when Pilate, who was governor of Judea, ascertained beyond a doubt that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead, and ascended to heaven, he sent word to the Emperor TIBERIUS, who, upon hearing the strange intelligence, called together his chief councillors, and requested them to admit Jesus Christ to a rank amongst their gods; for it was not lawful for the Romans to deify any individuals without the consent and approbation of the Senate. The proposal of the emperor was rejected by the Senate, who were indignant because the people had dared to worship Christ before they had examined into his merits, and ascertained whether or not he was worthy of a seat amongst the gods. However, notwithstanding this rejection by the Senate, the emperor himself adhered to the opinion he had formed, retained his respect and veneration for Jesus Christ, and be-

\* *Gild. de Excid. Gent. Britannic. p. 9. Edit. Joss.*



haved with great kindness towards his professed followers—favoring them with liberty and the peaceable enjoyment of their possessions, and punishing all those who railed against or falsely accused them.

Although we have thus easily found out the precise time when the Gospel was first preached in this country, yet it is difficult to ascertain who were the heralds of these “good tidings of great joy.” It is the common opinion, that JOSEPH of Arimathea, who buried Jesus after his crucifixion, was the first Gospel messenger in Britain. The brief history of his coming here is this: When the Christians were scattered by the persecution spoken of in *Acts viii.*, some of them found their way to one country, and some to another. At this time, JOSEPH, LAZARUS, MARY MAGDALENE, MARTHA, and many others, were taken prisoners by the Jews; and, because they did not wish to put them to death, but to make their torments as lingering as possible, they placed them in a ship without either mast, sail, or rudder, that they might be in constant fear for their lives, either from shipwreck or famine.\* But GOD, who is “a very present help in trouble,” was their director. He watched and presided over them, until they landed, in perfect safety and in good health, in some part of France.

There they met with PHILIP the Apostle, who was disputing and reasoning with the Druids, the pagan priests of Britain and France before the introduction of Christianity. After the customary salutations, and having rested themselves for some time, Philip advised Joseph and twelve of his companions to sail for Britain. As they were endowed with the gift of tongues, they understood the language of every nation under the sun: they therefore preached to the Britons in pure and genuine Welsh. The subject upon which they chiefly discoursed was Idolatry—the worshipping of images and false gods. They described their idols after the manner of the scriptures: “They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: they have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths.” They

\* *Vide Uss. Britan. Eccles. Antiq. c. 2. p. 7, 8, &c. Ed. Lond. 1087.*

explained to them the nature of the true God, the Creator of heaven and earth ; that He was a Spirit of infinite wisdom and power. They told them how Man fell from his original state of purity and blessedness, and how corrupt and prone to evil he had been ever since he lost the favor of his Maker. They then urged upon them the necessity of a Saviour to atone for their sins, and to render satisfaction to the justice of an offended God ; and of their indispensable need of the gift of the Holy Ghost, to sanctify their obdurate hearts, and to bring them into a state of union with Christ Jesus.

The preaching of these holy men made such an impression on MEURIG AP GWAWDRYDD, the king of Britain, on COEL, his son, and on ARIFOG, chief captain of the army, that, like Agrippa, they were "almost persuaded to be Christians." *Acts xxvi.* For fear, however, of creating confusion in the country, (such are the imaginations of the carnal mind,) they continued to adhere to the religion in which they had been educated ; but thousands of the people, together with a number of their rulers and gentry, when they saw the miracles which these messengers of God wrought in His name, turned from their idols, embraced the Christian faith, and were baptized, both men and women. Nor was this in any wise displeasing to the king and his court ; for, besides giving them leave to preach the Gospel without interruption, he presented Joseph with the island of Fallen, in Somersetshire ; and gave to each of the others as much land as could be ploughed with one plough in a year, towards their support.

When Joseph saw the prosperity which attended his first ministration of the Gospel, he rejoiced in spirit, and built a church on the island of Fallen. If we can place confidence in an old tradition, Joseph consecrated this church to the Virgin Mary. It is added, in the same tradition, that when, some centuries afterwards, DAVID, the archbishop, was about to consecrate that church, Jesus Christ appeared to him in a dream, and forbade him, declaring that he himself had consecrated it, together with the burial-ground connected with it. This is only a fabricated story of the Papists, as the late bishop of Worcester has proved beyond the shadow of a doubt to those who will obey the dictates of reason, and submit to the authority of the ancient historians.\*

\* *Stillingfleet Orig. Britannic. c. 1, p. 11.*

Although, in the foregoing sketch of the early preaching of the Gospel in Britain, there are some few circumstances mentioned which are highly improbable, we are not to reject or to doubt the whole : if we do, we can with as much propriety deny the authenticity of ancient history generally, because tradition has been the ground-work of many of its narrations. It is generally believed that Joseph of Arimathea visited and preached on this island, notwithstanding the account we have of his coming is somewhat mingled with superstition. It is certain, however, that some of the Apostles, or one of the seventy disciples, came to this country ; for Gildas (as we have already remarked) testifies plainly as to the precise time of their arrival ; and Eos also, who wrote about the year 329, maintains the same fact, although he does not name the messengers who conveyed the Gospel hither.\* Some of the learned, indeed, contend that St. Paul was also here, if not at the same time with Joseph, yet shortly after. There is no doubt that St. Paul was in Spain, as we may infer from his epistle to the *Romans*, c. xv. v. 24. From thence he sojourned (says an old writer)† from one country to another, in imitation of the course of that glorious luminary, the sun, of which it is said, “ His going forth is from the end of the heavens, and his circuit unto the ends of it.” *Psalms* xix. 5. Clement speaks with still greater plainness and precision, and affirms that he travelled from Spain to the extremity of the West ;‡ by which, it is believed, he meant the island of Britain : and, to remove every shadow of doubt as to the meaning of “ the extremity of the West,” another old writer says, in so many words, that St. Paul preached in Britain.§ It is said, further, that St. Paul ordained Aristobulus, of whom he speaks in *Rom.* xvi. 10, as a bishop in this country.

I shall here relate a remarkable, yet true story, which has not hitherto been published in the Welsh language. A young woman, who was born and raised in Britain, had the principal agency in directing St. Paul to her native country. He alludes to her in his epistle to *Timothy*, under the name of

\* *Euseb. Demon. Evang.* l. 3, c. 7, p. 113.

† *Hieronym.*

‡ *Clem. Rom. Epist. ad Corinth.* p. 8.

§ *Theod. tom.* 4, *serm.* 9, p. 106.

CLAUDIA. 2 *Tim.* iv. 31. Her name at home was Gwladys Ruffydd. This lady was taken to Rome in company with Caractacus, the brave prince who so nobly contended with the Romans, as related in the preceding part of this history. She was there married to a nobleman called PUDENS, who was one of the saints of Cæsar's household, (*Philip.* iv. 22) or one of the emperor's courtiers. St. Paul, in 2 *Tim.* iv., speaks of him by this name, when he says, "Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia greet thee." Linus was their son. He was the first bishop of Rome,\* or the first Pope who resided there, although he was not known by that appellation in the primitive church. Inasmuch, then, as St. Paul was so intimate with this family, and had been chiefly instrumental in their conversion, Claudia persuaded him, after much earnest entreaty, to bend his course towards Britain, that her countrymen might obtain from him some knowledge of the Christian religion. Here we find a lady, originally from Wales, whose name is recorded in the New Testament, and whose zeal for the glory of God was so fervent that she could not rest satisfied with being a Christian herself, but was anxious that all her countrymen should be favored with an opportunity of hearing the glad tidings of salvation, from the mouth of the most devoted champion of the Cross.

Claudia was a lady of such great personal beauty and holiness of life, that she became a theme of commendation to the poets of that age: amongst other laudatory stanzas, was the following:

Claudia cœruleis cum sis Ruffina Britannis  
 Edita, cur Latiae pectora plebis habes?  
 Quale decus formæ? Romanam credere matres  
 Italides possunt: Atthides esse suam!†

*Martial, lib. 11, epi. 54.*

\* *Vide Uss. Brit. Eccles. Antiq. c. 1, p. 5.*

† *For a versification of this, see the ADDENDA.*

CHAPTER II.—*Lles ap Coel, or Lucius, the first king who embraced the Christian faith—A great persecution of the Christians in Britain—The martyrdom of Alban—The Heresy of Arius—The Heresy of Morgan—the coming of Garmon and Lupus to Britain from France—The form of prayer made use of by the Primitive Church in Britain.*

THE great and mighty Apostle, ST. PAUL, having preached the Gospel amongst the Britons, and they having become so well established in the principles of religion, it is not surprising that the Christian faith spread amongst them with great rapidity. Indeed, the word of life extended so widely, that there was scarcely a section of the island where the joyful sound of the Gospel was not heard, in the course of a few years.

Some time during the year 197, Tertullian, an ancient teacher in Africa, thus commended the Britons on account of the increase of Christianity amongst them: "The Christian faith (said he) has penetrated into every quarter of their country—even into those parts which the sword of the Romans could never subdue."\* It is true that Tertullian lived at a great distance from Britain, and, consequently, what he said was upon the authority of others; yet there can be no doubt that the Gospel had spread exceedingly, or it would not have been considered a matter of importance in a country so remote as Africa. "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." *Acts* xix. 20.

The next account we have of the Primitive Church in Britain is about the year 160, when LLES AP COEL, or LUCIUS, who was then king over a great part of England, became a convert to Christianity. This was the country, above all others in the world, where the promise made to the Christian Church was first fulfilled: "And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord." *Isaiah* xlix. 23. This prophecy, I say, was ful-

\* *Tertul. advers. Judæos*, c. 7.

filled in Britain at an earlier period than in any other country in the world ; for it was here that the first king in all Christendom received baptism.

Although the Christian religion, as I said before, had taken deep root in every part of the kingdom, yet the majority of the great men continued to adhere to their old religion and the doctrines of the Druids. One cause of this was, that the Romans, most of whom were decided enemies to Christianity, at this time possessed great influence in Britain. The Lord, however, was pleased to reveal himself in an extraordinary manner, as a prayer-hearing God ; and the circumstances attending this display of his goodness made a lasting impression upon the minds of the people generally throughout Europe. When the emperor of Rome, MARCUS AURELIUS, was at war with a bold and daring people towards the North, his army were at one time ready to perish for want of water. More than half of them were Christians, moral and devout men, who, being full of faith and hope, poured out their prayers to the Lord for deliverance from the dreadful death which evidently awaited them. Their prayers were answered—the clouds poured forth an abundant supply of rain : they drank, and were satisfied. But lightning and devouring fire fell upon their enemies, and they were utterly destroyed. ‘ When the poor and the needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them—I the God of Israel will not forsake them.’ *Isa. xli. 17.*

This manifestation of divine providence had such an effect upon the emperor, that, thenceforward, he shewed much kindness to the Christians, although he did not embrace their religion ; but Lles ap Coel, when he was fully persuaded of the truth of this and many other miracles which the Almighty was pleased to perform, to confirm the truth of the Gospel, fully determined with a steadfast heart to cast away his idols, and, by the mercy of God, was converted, and became a decided Christian.

Now, although there were many Christians at home, Lles ap Coel applied for instruction to the Bishop of Rome, which was at that time the metropolis of Europe. One reason for his thus seeking advice from this source was that the Romans had great influence in Britain, and a continual interchange of

commercial dealings was carried on between the two nations. At that time, and for many ages afterwards, the doctrine of the Church of Rome was pure and incorruptible. There was, as yet, no such a thing as popery in any part of christendom.

Here follows a copy of the letter sent by Lles ap Coel to the bishop of Rome. "Lles ap Coel, king of Britain, to the right Rev. Father in God, Eleutherius, bishop of Rome, sendeth greeting : I have for a length of time suffered great trouble of mind, from a desire to ascertain what religion would be the best for me and my subjects. But now I begin to know the miserable state of my ignorance, without any knowledge of God or of his religion, I am persuaded that idols can do nothing, and it is certain that those who trust in them are fools. Therefore, I beseech you, right rev'd. father, to send over to Britain some of your pious men to instruct me in the Christian faith. Fare thee well."

The names of the messengers who carried this letter to the bishop of Rome, were ELWY and MOUDHWY, who if they were not Christians before they left their own country, were certainly confirmed in the faith by the associations they formed with the pious at Rome. They were highly respected there, especially by having the bread of life set before them ; for notwithstanding all the artificial works and wonders that were to be seen in that great city, their chief delight was to associate daily with learned and pious people—to read histories of the faith, &c. Moudhwy was ordained a teacher, or catechist, and Elwy was consecrated a Bishop. There are many churches in Wales which bear his name, and, amongst others, Llan-elwy, near Builth; and there is a town in Meirionethshire called Dinas-Moudhwy, but whether this town had its name from the above named Moudhwy, is more than I can tell with any degree of certainty.

The Bishop sent with these messengers to Britain, two excellent men of his own Diocess, according to the desire of *Lles ap Coel*. Their names were DYFAN and FRAGAN. Whilst Elwy and Moudhwy were at Rome, they became acquainted with Timothy, another son of Gwladys Ruffydd mentioned in the last chapter. Timothy was a fervent Christian, mighty in the scriptures, and full of zeal for the glory

of God: he voluntarily renounced all the worldly advancement which he might have enjoyed at Rome, was ordained, and sailed with the others to preach the Gospel amongst his mother's kinsmen and countrymen. It was from his hand that king Lles ap Coel received Baptism. Now, by the labors of these able teachers in Britain, nearly the whole kingdom were induced to embrace the Christian faith: for not only the common people, but the king and the great men of his court, the lords and other high officers of the country, received baptism, and the darkness fled away like mist before the morning sun. There are many churches in Wales consecrated to the memory of Dyfan and Ffagan; for instance, such as Llandyfan and Llan-S.-Ffagan.

Some considerable time afterwards, king Lles sent another message to the bishop of Rome, requesting a copy of the Roman Laws, that he might adopt them in the government of Britain; to which the bishop answered as follows:

“You have requested me to send you a copy of the Roman Laws, that you might govern the British kingdom with the same. We often see defects in the Roman laws, but there is nothing “froward or perverse” in the laws of heaven. You have lately, by the grace of God, received the law and faith of Jesus Christ in the kingdom of Britain: I would therefore admonish your majesty and your counsellors to make laws out of these, that you may, by the help of God, govern your kingdom wisely. You are God's vicergerent in Britain, as the royal psalmist says: “The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof—the world, and they that dwell therein.” *Psalm* xxiv. 1. And again: “Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.” *Psalm* lxxii. 1. He does not say, the judgments and righteousness of the emperor of Rome. The “king's sons” are the Christian people, and your subjects who dwell peaceably under your government and protection. As a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, so should the king act towards his people. The inhabitants of Britain are your people and your subjects, and, if they quarrel, it is your duty to pacify their wrath, and succor them in their distress—to lead them aright, and to defend them from their enemies. It is your duty, also, to exert yourself to the utmost, in order that they may receive the faith of Jesus Christ, and be built up



in the same. 'Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning' *Ecc.* x. 16. A child in years is not here referred to, but a child in respect to foolishness and wickedness, as the Psalmist says: 'Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days.' *Ps.* lv. 23. By eating, the mouth is to be understood—by the mouth, excess—and by excess, whatever is unclean, refractory, or atrocious; as it is observed in the *Wisdom of Solomon*, (Apocrypha,) c. i. v. 4: 'For into a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter, nor dwell in the body that is subject to sin.' May the Almighty God enable you to govern the British kingdom in such a manner, that you may reign with Him for ever and ever!"

There were in Britain, at that period, twenty-eight cities, as mentioned in the last chapter of the first part of this history. Of these, London and York were considered the principal in England, and Caerleon on Usk in Wales. In these three cities, (in order that each one should govern his own district,) three of the chief Druids resided; and in the other cities Druids of a lower rank, and having less authority, administered the laws. When Lles ap Coel espoused Christianity, he dismissed all these priests from office, and appointed archbishops and bishops in their stead, respectively. We must confess, however, that great doubts are entertained by the learned as to the authenticity of this account,\* because, say they, Lles ap Coel was not king of the whole country, but only of a part; for the Romans, by the force of their arms, had subdued a considerable portion of it, in which, of course, Lles ap Coel had no power or authority. That there were bishops, of higher rank in the Church than common ministers, (as has been the case in all Christian countries since the time of the Apostles,) there can be no doubt. Formerly, when the boundaries of Wales were more extended than they now are, there were seven bishops, viz. those of Hereford, Worcester, Bangor, St. Asaph, Anglesea, Llandaf, and Llanbadarn-fawr, who were all under the direction and supervision of the archbishop of Caerleon-on-Usk, at which place the archbishoprick was located before its removal to St.

\* *Goodwin de Convers. Brit.* p. 34; *Uss. Brit. Ecl. Ant.* p. 55; *Stillingfleet's Orig. Brit.* p. 78.

David's. This removal was effected by Dewi or David, a nephew of king Arthur, from whom the place received its name. A.D. 521. Llanbadarn-fawr, in Cardiganshire, was the seat of a bishoprick for some centuries, until the year 999, when the sons of Belial rushed upon their bishop, and with cruel hands put him to death. It is thought that his remains are interred at Llanddewi bresi, where there is a tombstone with the following inscription: "Hic jacet Idnert, filius——, qui occisus fuit propter pietatem et sanctitatem." That is, "Here lieth Idnerth, the son of——, who was slain because he was a pious and holy man." St. David's continued to be the seat of the archbishoprick until the year 1100, when, by violence and injustice, it was deprived of the title.

After the death of Lles ap Coel, the Britons lost the regal government, with the exception of a few lords and princes, whose authority was still supreme in those parts of the kingdom into which the Roman arms could not penetrate. From this period, for about eighty years, history relates nothing of importance in connection with the Primitive Church. At the expiration of that time, the heartless and unfeeling tyrant Dioclesian† excited a violent & inhuman persecution against

† Gibbon, whose voracity as an historian has never yet been questioned, and whose means of acquiring information were at least as ample as those which our author possessed, releases Dioclesian from the blame of exciting this persecution, and places it upon Galerius, his associate in the empire. He observes:

"Although the policy of Diocletian and the humanity of Constantius inclined them to preserve inviolate the maxims of toleration, it was soon discovered that their two associates, Maximian and Galerius, entertained the most implacable aversion for the name and religion of the Christians. The minds of those princes had never been enlightened by science: education had never softened their temper. They owed their greatness to their swords, and in their most elevated fortune, they still retained their superstitious prejudices of soldiers and peasants."

"After the success of the Persian war had raised the hopes and the reputation of Galerius, he passed a winter with Dioclesian in the palace of Nicomedia; and the fate of Christianity became the object of their secret consultations. The experienced emperor was still inclined to pursue measures of lenity; and, though he readily consented to exclude the Christians from holding any employments in the household of the army, he urged in the strongest terms the danger as well as cruelty of shedding their blood."

"The next day, the general edict of persecution was published: and though Dioclesian, still averse to the effusion of blood, had

the Christians. This was the last general persecution (being the tenth) recorded by ancient historians. To such an extent was it carried, that it seemed as if all the hosts of earth and hell had combined to render it complete and universal. The Christians, the meek and lowly followers of the Lamb, were assailed in every quarter, & martyred in every possible form. The oppressor Dioclesian, possessed, as it were, with a legion of fiends, had planned the destruction of every Christian in the world; and, when he imagined his schemes were perfected, he caused a monument to be erected, with the following blasphemous inscription: "The superstition of Christ completely annihilated, and the worship of the gods extended throughout the world."<sup>\*</sup>

Lest the Christians should find a refuge in any part of the world, he sent instructions to the governor of Britain, engraved on brass, charging him strictly and authoritatively to burn all Christian books, to destroy their places of worship, so that not a paper should be left containing the doctrines of Jesus Christ, or the history of the lives of the Primitive Christians. This was the first time that the records of the ancient Britons, which were more precious than fine gold, were destroyed. A.D. 285. The royal proclamation was to this effect—that if the Christians would renounce the faith of Jesus, and sacrifice to the gods, they should be honorably received and respected; but that, if they continued obstinately to adhere to the cause they had espoused, they should be tortured and put to death in the most cruel manner that ingenuity could invent. And, to speak truly, the executioners were not backward in fulfilling the bloody mandate; for, although no crime could be laid to the charge of the Christians, (unless, indeed, their virtues and holiness could be branded with that appellation,) no favor or mercy was shewn to them. The officers who were commissioned to execute the commands of the tyrant took delight in burning and otherwise

moderated the fury of Galerius, who proposed that every one refusing to offer sacrifice should immediately be burnt alive, the penalties inflicted upon the obstinacy of the Christians might be deemed sufficiently rigorous and effectual."

Pub's.

\* *Gruter's Inscriptions*, p. 280.

torturing them, nor did their zeal in the cause of cruelty and barbarity slacken or grow cool. They continued their career of persecution, pursuing it in every part of the kingdom, for the space of twelve months.\* As fire tries metal, so persecution proves the sincerity of the professor of Christianity. This will shew how steadfast he is in the faith—with what resignation he can endure hardships and privations for the sake of his Lord and Master—with what serenity of countenance he can meet the frowns of the world, the scorn and contempt of his enemies, the wrath and indignation of kings and rulers—and with what calmness and complacency he can witness the preparations for his execution, smile upon those who are commissioned to carry them into effect, and fly into the embrace of death. But it also shews the weakness of the *mere* professor—of him who, whilst danger is at a distance, is the loudest in his protestations of sincerity and zeal, but, when persecution arises, is the foremost to seek safety in recantation. It proves the fervor, the firmness, the undaunted constancy of the true Christian; and it also removes the mask of hypocrisy which has hitherto been thrown over the life and conduct of the nominal believer in Christ. In the present instance, no doubt, there were many novices in the faith, many unstable hypocrites, and some of corrupt and abandoned conduct, who, in order to save their lives, gave up their profession, and turned to the worshipping of idols; but the majority of them renounced their all, gave up their dearest earthly enjoyments, relinquished every favorite prospect, and yielded their lives a willing sacrifice to the cause of Christ. Amongst those who stood conspicuous in the ranks of the latter, was ST. ALBAN, a native of Ferolam, whose name deserves to occupy the first place in the list of martyrs; for he was the first who suffered death in Britain for conscience' sake.

Whilst the Christians were suffering great tribulation from the increasing fury of their persecutors, a godly minister lodged at the house of St. Alban, who, as yet, was an unbeliever, or, at least, not altogether a Christian; but, by observing closely the holy conduct of this pious man, and paying strict attention to his reasoning, he soon began to understand that the Deity could not be like gold and silver, or pre-

\* *Vide Pont. Tirum. l. 5, p. 34.*

cious stones, cunningly carved according to man's imagination; therefore, by the grace of God, he turned to be a Christian. When the officers learned that this minister lodged secretly at the house of St. Alban, they endeavored to secure him. As they were proceeding to search the house, Alban dressed himself in the minister's clothing, and said, "I am the man whom ye seek; behold I am ready; take me to the judge." But when the judge saw that he was not the man, his anger was kindled, and he said to Alban, "Inasmuch as thou didst suffer that deceiver and imposter to escape, and didst come thyself in his stead, behold yonder are the tortures which he should have endured, if he had been arrested; and unless thou wilt immediately bow before and sacrifice to the gods, thou shalt have no more favor than he." Alban answered firmly, "Be it known to thee, O judge! that I will not bow before thine idols; for I am a Christian and worship the living God, the Creator of heaven and earth. The judge, upon seeing Alban so steadfast, became seven times more exasperated than before, and commanded him to be scourged with a "scourge of small cords," thinking that this would cause his courage to fail: but this pious man suffered the pain and reproach with a cheerful countenance, rejoicing that he was counted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Christ. Upon this, the judge, in the most unfeeling manner, commanded him to be beheaded.\*

Between the palace of the judge and the place of execution, there was a large river called Thames; but the bridge over this river was so narrow that the half of the multitude could not pass over it, from morning until night, for there was a great multitude of men and women, who followed the good man to the place of execution; they were chiefly heathens, and a mixture of Britons and Romans. After waiting for some time at the river side, Alban became impatient for the crown of martyrdom, and, raising his eyes toward heaven, prayed with all his power, and immediately the waters which descended from above stood still in a heap, (as the stream of Jordan did in the time of Joshua) and the people all passed over on dry ground.†

On this occasion the executioner was greatly astonished,

\* *Bed. Hist. Ecl. L 1. C. 7.*

† *Sicco ingrediens pade. Gild. p. 11.*

and, believing that such a remarkable event could not have been effected by any other power than that of God, he cast away the bloody sword which he had carried unsheathed in his hand, with the intention of slaying St. Alban, and suffered martyrdom with him who, according to the testimony of the old teachers, although not baptized with water, was baptized in his own blood. The men and women who were present, about one thousand in number, were tortured and tormented in every possible manner. Their consciences were also affected and they were converted to christianity. They did not return to Ferolam, because that city was full of unbelievers, but some of them wandered in deserts, others went to Carleon, in Wales, in order to be better instructed in the principles of religion: but their bloody persecutors followed them wherever they went, and the greatest part of them fell martyrs in the glorious cause. Such was the assurance of their hope, that neither death, in its most frightful form, nor all the cruelty of their persecutors, nor all the fiery darts of Satan, could overthrow their faith, or cause them to deny their religion. It is said that, in the midst of the most cruel tortures which the malice of their enemies could invent, they committed their souls to God, by singing hymns of praise and songs of thanksgiving to Christ, for accounting them worthy to suffer for him.\* But to return to St. Alban, the leader of the rest. When he and the multitude that followed him came to the place of death, the executioner being converted, as we have already mentioned, would not on any account cut off the head of this good man. Indeed, had there been no fear of the unmerciful judge, scarcely any one would have been found so unfeeling as to perform the office. Whilst they were disputing with one another, Alban walked calmly and with a cheerful countenance to the top of an adjacent hill, (the crowd following him,) where the ascent from the woods and vegetables was very gratifying; and, as the river had dried up a few hours before in answer to his prayer, so here a fountain of clear water sprang up at his supplication, to quench the thirst of his followers. When they had waited an hour or two, another executioner (a son of Belial) was found, who undertook the work, in order to obtain the favor of the bloody judge: but he had but a poor reward for his presumption; for at the moment when he cut

\* *Uss. Brit. Eccles. Antiq.*

off the head of that holy man, his own eyes leaped from his head.\* It is said that a bright pillar of light made its appearance on the same night, and that angels were visible, some of them descending and others ascending it, singing hymns of praise to God, and saying among other things, "ALBAN, excellent man and celebrated martyr, suffered the twentieth of June, in the year 285." A large church, an excellent building, consecrated to his name, (as he was the first martyr in Britain,) was built in the town of Ferolam, the place of his nativity. On this spot there is now remaining only a town called St. Alban's, not far distant from the city of London.

We have only the names of three or four more of these good men, viz. JULIUS, ARON, and AMPHIBAL, who were citizens of Caerleon in Monmouthshire, where there were formerly two churches consecrated to the memory of the two first. AUGULIUS also, the bishop of London, suffered martyrdom at the same time. There is no doubt that several thousands, of all ages and situations, suffered; for, besides the thousand already mentioned, Gildas informs us that very many, male and female, were martyred in many parts of the kingdom, and that they met their fate with a degree of courage becoming the soldiers of Jesus Christ, although we do not know their names. I shall conclude this subject in the words of a pious man, who says as follows: "The last persecution was the most cruel, which continued ten years, (not in Britain but in other countries,) rending to pieces the people of God. In this contest, the whole world was red with the blood of the holy martyrs. Then could be seen glorious multitudes hastening to be executed, and rejoicing as they went along. They then sought the crown of martyrdom with more avidity, if possible, than they now seek bishopricks, or promotion in the church. There were more saints of the Most High martyred in this persecution than there ever were soldiers in war; nor was there ever greater cause for Christians to triumph than when, after enduring the violence of the hellish madness of their persecutors for ten years, they not only remained firm, but even increased and prospered more and more."†

\* *Bed. Hist. Eccles. L. 1. C. 7.*

† *Sulp. Sever. Hist. Sac. L. 4. p. 302.*

When the unmerciful tyrant with his brutal officers became at last tired of the work of killing, burning, and executing Christians, or rather when the cruel Emperor saw that his attempts to erase christianity and to be worshipped himself as God would not prosper, (as he at first intended,\*) he repealed the bloody mandate, and gave the Christians liberty to serve God as they were wont to do, without molestation. Then, in order that he might have no power afterwards to punish them, he voluntarily renounced his supreme authority, and retreated, as it were, out of the sight of the world to some secret corner, where he spent the latter part of his life, in melancholy and despondency, in gardens and orchards: such places, however, were too good for him. But after having dragged out an uneasy life, rendered still more intolerable by the stings of a guilty conscience, for nine years, one of the high officers of Rome became angry with him; and for fear of a public and shameful death, he took a cup of deadly poison, and went, like Judas, to his own place. His successor was a virtuous, worthy man called Constantius, who married Helen, a daughter of Coel Codebog, of Britain, who was the mother of Constantine the Great, the first emperor of Rome who received the faith of Christ. His father also was favorable to christianity, and like Agrippa was "almost persuaded" to be a christian. He did all he could to put an end to the persecution, but the tyrant Dioclesian exacted implicit obedience to whatever he commanded; but, by his authority in Britain, (for at first he was only a governor here under the emperor,) the persecution did not continue more than a year or a year and a half in this country, although it raged, without abatement, in other countries for upwards of ten years.†

\* *V. Stillingfleet Orig. Brit. p. 70.*

† The mild and humane temper of Constantius was averso to the oppression of any part of his subjects. The principal offices of his palace were exercised by Christians. He loved their persons, esteemed their fidelity, and entertained not any dislike to their religious principles. But as long as Constantius remained in the subordinate station of Cesar, it was not in his power openly to reject the edicts of Dioclesian, or to disobey the commands of Maximian. His authority contributed, however, to alleviate the sufferings which he pitied and abhorred. He consented, with reluctance, to the ruin of the churches; but he ventured to protect the Christians themselves from the fury of the populace, and from the rigour of the laws: the provinces of Gaul (under which we may probably include those of Britain) were indebted for the singular tranquillity which they enjoyed, to the gentle interposition of their sovereign.—*Gibbon.*



Before I proceed to shew the consequences that happened with regard to religion, after the persecution just spoken of, I cannot do less than refute the slander of those who have asserted, contrary to light and truth, that christianity disappeared entirely from Britain, from this time until Pope GRIGORY sent AUGUSTINE the Monk to preach the Gospel among the Saxons. The truth is, this story has arisen from the false zeal and partiality of Roman Catholics to the Pope and to Popery. We would ask, could christianity vanish away in so short a time in Britain, when the long continuance of the most cruel tortures and persecutions in other countries failed to eradicate or exterminate it? It is known to all that ten bloody persecutions took place in many countries, during the three first ages of christianity; and yet it is said that the Christians increased rather than diminished in number. The blood of the martyrs produced one hundred fold, and was the means of increasing and strengthening the church.\* In Britain, however, there was but one persecution, which continued only a year and a half; and, pray, would this *one* root out the christian religion entirely from Britain, when *ten* could not accomplish it in other countries? Were the ancient Britons so fickle, so ready to give up?—No: they were not; for,

1st. We are informed that the Bishops of Britain attended at several assemblies of ministers, which were held from time to time before Augustine came to Britain to preach to the English. There were three of our Archbishops in that great assembly, which was held in the year 314, in the kingdom of France, viz. IVOR, Archbishop of York, RUXSTYD, Archbishop of London, and BRAWDOL, Archbishop of Caerleon, in Monmouth, which last city was in ancient times one of the most noted for its splendour, and the magnificence and neatness of its buildings.† Its first foundation was laid in the time of Beli ap Dyfnwal Mael-mud, or *Dunwallo Moel Mutius*, (the father of Beli and Bran, or *Belinus* and *Brennus* mentioned in *part I. chap. 1.* of this work,) who began to reign about 400 years before Christ. London was also an

\* *Martyrum Sanguis, Semen Ecclesiae.*

† Girard. *Nimer. Cambr. L.* 1. *Cap.* 5. *p.* 107.

archbishoprick, and continued so until Augustine removed it to Canterbury, where it still remains.

There were seven Bishops subject to the Archbishop of York, seven subject to the Archbishop of Caerleon; and fourteen subject to the Archbishop of London. Thus, inasmuch as there were so many bishops and archbishops, with what countenance can any man insist that the christian religion was extinguished in Britain after the above persecution, until the mission of Augustine? It is, however, a matter of little consequence to those who are too zealous in their attachment to the Pope and to Popery, whether they speak the truth or not.

Inasmuch as the canons of that assembly give some explanation of church discipline in Britain, I shall here add a few of its decisions. It was enjoined there, 1st. That no bishop ought to interfere in things belonging to the diocese of another: 2d. That no archbishop ought to ordain a bishop, without taking seven other bishops with him, if so many could be had within his jurisdiction—otherwise, three might answer the purpose: 3d. That every priest ought to be excommunicated who was known to be guilty of usury: 4th. That deacons ought not to consecrate the bread and wine in the communion: 5th. That those young women who married unbelievers ought to be suspended for some time from partaking of the sacrament: 6th. That those who bore false witness against their neighbors ought to be kept from the Lord's table during their life time: 7th. That a person excommunicated in one place ought not to be absolved in another: 8th. That no apostate (or one who has denied his religion) should be received into communion on his sick bed, but that the cause ought to be delayed in order to know if he truly repent, and if there be a reformation in his life: 9th. That no one ought to be rebaptized, who had been baptized in the name of the Blessed Trinity.\*

And not only in the above assembly, but in nearly all that were held in the western countries, (even in Italy, Spain, and France,) our bishops from Britain were present, and voted like the rest. In a large assembly held A. D. 359, in Italy, our bishops were as much renowned for their learning and

\* *Sirmond. Concil. p. 9, 10, 11.*

gifts, as any others who were present. When the Emperor proposed to keep them at his own expense, (inasmuch as many of them had come from distant countries,) our bishops, with due respect to him for his kind offer, rejected it, with the exception of three of them, whose funds were rather scarce: these thankfully received his offer, as it enabled them to avoid intruding upon others.\* It is true that some canons were made at this assembly, which savor strongly of the Heresy of Arius, who denied the Divinity of Christ Jesus; and Constantius, the son of Constantine the Great, was greatly corrupted with this erroneous opinion. Yet the ancient bishops were not nearly all corrupted, and, among others, we may judge that our bishops were sound in the faith, because old writers testify that the church in Britain about this time was orthodox, as I am now going to shew.

2nd. About the year 380, a sincere old teacher called CHRYSOSTOM, or JOHN AURENA, wrote as follows: "The language of the Britons is an awkward and imperfect one, but in their principles respecting religion they harmonize delightfully: they are correct. Their language, it is true, is absurd, rough, and coarse, but their morals are meek and holy.† He thought their language was clumsy and incorrect, because he did not understand it; and so the Greeks estimated every language with which they were unacquainted. Yet he testifies that they were sound in the faith. Before his time, that pious father, St. ATHANASIUS, speaks of the faith of the Britons in a letter which he wrote, A. D. 363, to the emperor Julian, in these words: "Be it known to thee, O Emperor, most beloved of God, that this faith, which our fathers established at the assembly of Nice in the year 325, has been preached in every country, province, and kingdom, since Christ has ascended into heaven, and that it is received by the entire Catholic church throughout Spain, Britain, France, Italy, &c."‡ This testimony is an indubitable proof of the soundness and consistency of the faith in Britain, according to the principles of religion established at Nice, by all the bishops of Christendom, and maintained to this day by all the churches of

\* *Sulp. Sev. Hist. Sac. L. 2.*

† *Chrys. Op. T. 8. p. 111.*

‡ *Theodor. Hist. Eccles. L. 3. C. 3. p. 640.*

Christ, and, amongst others, by the Church of England, as may be seen in her liturgy.

Constantine the great, A. D. 325, convened a council at Nice, a city in Asia Minor, in which more than three hundred bishops were present ; but the register of their names is lost.\* It cannot, therefore, be ascertained whether there were any from Britain or not. This, however, we certainly do know : the emperor sent to every country and province within the empire, inviting them, and all the bishops of Christendom to meet, in order to establish the principles of religion against the Heresy of Arius, which at that time had recently made its appearance. Considering, too, that Constantine himself was a Briton, both by birth and education, & that he was so earnest in calling them together from all the provinces within the empire, it can hardly be believed that he would possibly omit or neglect the men of his own country : we may therefore be pretty certain that bishops from Britain were present when the Nicæan creed was formed.†

It would be superfluous to prove that the Britons, or a great part of them at least, were Christians after the persecution above mentioned, and before Augustine came to preach to the English ; for Gildas, the oldest historian of this country, speaks as follows : “ After the awful storm had continued nearly ten years, and when the bloody mandate to martyr Christians was repealed, those who had hid themselves in deserts, and caves, and rocks, appeared in public, and began to rebuild the churches which had been destroyed, & to erect new ones in memory of the names of Martyrs who had suffered during the persecution. Thus we see them now unfurling their banners as a sign of victory. They observe their holidays, and offer their prayers to God with sincere hearts ; and every member of Christ is leaping for joy, as he now reposes on the bosom of the church, as if reclining on the bosom of his mother.”‡

Let us understand, from these remarks of Gildas, that the consecration of churches to the memory of the martyrs was

\* *Socrat. Hist. Eccles. Lib. 1. Cap. 9.*

† *V. Stillingsf. Orig. Brit. p. 89, &c.*

‡ *Gild. Ep. p. 11, 12.*

not a superstitious imagination, or a feature of Popery, because at that time, and for many years afterwards, the errors of Popery had not entered into the Christian Church. Gildas speaks of churches being consecrated in honor of those holy men and women who had fallen martyrs in the cause of Christ. At these times there was neither mass, purgatory, worshipping of saints, nor any other of those superstitious practices which were subsequently introduced. We have every reason, therefore, to suppose, that the laudable custom of consecrating churches was followed by the primitive Christians from the time of the Apostle. It is believed that it was the feast of martyrs, or the feast which the primitive Christians observed in memory of the saints who had been martyred, (answering to what we generally call *gwylmab-sant*,\* a wake,) to which Gildas alludes, when he says that the ancient Britons kept holidays after the rage and violence of persecution had subsided, and they were permitted to enjoy that repose of which the enemies of their religion had deprived them; for, as churches were consecrated to their memory, it was enjoined upon them to observe the day on which they were martyred, every year, in order to encourage the survivors to imitate their virtues, and emulate their zeal and devotedness to God. These holidays were observed in the primitive Church with strict sincerity; and to be absent from the public worship of God, on that day, was accounted a reprehensible neglect.† One of the ancient Fathers said, “We observe a day in remembrance of the saints who were martyred on account of their faith, rejoicing in the heavenly rest which they enjoyed with God, notwithstanding all their bodily sufferings and afflictions. We do not keep the anniversary of their birth, for that was the commencement of their troubles and temptations; but we observe the day of their death, because that was the close of their sufferings,

\* *Mybr y Sanct (memoria martyrum) says Mr. Rowland in his history of the Island of Anglesea. Mon. Antiq. page 190.*

† “In process of time,” says a writer in the Christian Herald of November 9, 1833, in an article on the Antiquities and Religion of Wales, “this festival degenerated into a bacchanalian and riotous scene, which continued for centuries to exert a demoralizing influence in Wales, till the last century, when many heathenish notions, and practices, and immoralities were opposed and suppressed by the universal efforts and Christian zeal of ministers of the Gospel.”

and ushered them into a state of never-ending happiness and joy."\* All the old teachers of the primitive church speak of this feast, and assure us that every orthodox christian in their day, and even from the time of the Apostles, observed it.

Having seen that religion was not annihilated in Britain, and that a considerable part of the Britons were Christians, (for we do not say that a majority of them were so,) and sound in the faith, we will proceed to notice their apostacy from the religion they had espoused. This truly is a melancholy part of our history: But inasmuch as it so happened that the enemy sowed such poisonous seed in our country, it is proper to examine their nature. The matter stands thus:

A man called ARIUS, a priest in Alexandria, a large city in Egypt, was anxious to exalt himself and become a bishop; but because he did not succeed, he was displeased and offended, and being vain, and selfish, formed an intention of becoming famous in some other way, even if it should lead to destruction. He was an eloquent man, and appeared zealous in favor of religion; but he was bold and obstinate. At first he only hinted his sentiments to his friends; afterwards he mentioned them in public, and at last contended openly that "Jesus Christ was only a prophet sent by God; that he was not God and Man—that he was not God, of the same substance as the Father, begotten before the ages; and that he was of himself liable to error, and could sin as well as do good."†—This caused great confusion through all Christendom. Although there was no danger of overturning the faith of those who were well instructed in the principles of religion, yet there were too many wrangling characters, wise in their own conceit, and desirous of becoming new teachers. Such men considered the doctrine as peculiarly pleasing. This was the reason why Constantine the Great, (the most renowned emperor in the world,) called together the bishops of every province to meet at Nice, a city in Bithynia in Asia; where three hundred and twenty met, and, among the rest, the bishops of Britain, to establish the true religion against the false opinions of Arius.

\* *Expos. in Job. 2, l. 3, p. 32. V. Eus. Hist. Ecl. lib. 4, cap. 15. Tertull. de Coron. Milit. p. 102, c. 3.*

† *Suo lebero arbitrio vitii et virtutis capax. Sozom. Hist. Eclès. l. 1, c. 14, p. 13.*

During the reign of Constantine the Great, this atrocious heresy dared not make its appearance in Britain; nor yet in the time of his son, although it is true that the latter made shipwreck of the faith, and turned a heretic—for he was an effeminate, light-headed, unstable man, notwithstanding the exalted station in which he was placed. About the year 380 GRATIAN was crowned emperor of Rome: he was an easy, quiet man, and was simple enough to be persuaded to make it known through every country and province, that “Every one should have leave to follow whatever opinion he pleased in matters of religion.”\* This only opened the door for all manner of excess, presumption, and blasphemy. Now, certainly, it was fulfilled that “Five should be in the same house, divided, three against two, and two against three; the father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father—the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother—the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.” *Luke xii. 34, 35.*

This was the time that the heresy of Arius came first to Britain, A. D. 381, when every one was at liberty to belch out whatever blasphemy he chose without either punishment or censure. It might be thought that such doctrine could never have agreed with the stomach of a Christian, who knew any thing of the salvation purchased by Christ; yet the corrupt nature of man is so prone to embrace something new, that there was scarcely a neighborhood in Christendom, in which there were not some wavering souls poisoned with this heresy. It is also astonishing that the frightful end of Arius did not make some impression upon the minds of men, and deter them from embracing his sentiments; for, as he went to ease his body, he burst in the middle, and all his bowels gushed out in the same manner as it happened to JUDAS, the traitor, his brother in the faith before him.† But, notwithstanding this dreadful event, this destructive doctrine was received and welcomed in the palaces of kings and emperors, and by too many of the different degrees of the clergy, who expected preferment by these means, having in view the glory of this world and their own advancement. It is said, indeed, that LIBERIUS, bishop of Rome, was corrupted, and that he signed

\* *Socr. Hist. l. 5, c. 2. Sozom. l. 7, c. 1.*

† *Sozom. Hist. Eccles. l. 2, c. 28.*

a paper signifying that he agreed in doctrine with Arius ;\* although the papists will not own this—showing plainly, amongst a hundred other things which might be mentioned, that the Pope is as subject to mistakes as another man.

These erroneous principles proved much more injurious than the most cruel persecution ; for heresy (that is, a denial of, or error in, principles essential to salvation) leads headlong to perdition and destruction, and is the highway to hell. It was on this account that St. Paul warned Titus : “ A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.” *Titus* iii. 10. But martyrdom, (although it is bitter to flesh and blood, and is, moreover, a fiery trial,) removes the Christian from the misery of this world, to the everlasting glory which is above. “ He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that shall lose his life for my sake shall find it,” saith the Saviour of the world. *Matt.* x. 39. And because the ancient Britons made God angry with them by dishonoring the second person in the blessed Trinity, “ God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient : being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity.” *Rom.* i. 28, 29. “ Christ will judge those that cause heresies and divisions in the church, (said Irenæus, an excellent old teacher,) who are cruel men, destitute of love to God, but who love gain and advantage to themselves better than the unity of the church. These for every trifling cause will send and divide the glorious body of Jesus Christ, even the Catholic church ; and, if it were in their power, they would destroy it. These will speak words of peace : they use fair words, but their intention is to breed contention and confusion.”† “ It is the devil (said another old master) who is the author of heresies and divisions in the church, and causes them in order that he may overturn the faith, corrupt the truth, and destroy the unity of the church of Christ.”‡ These are the sentiments of the old teachers respecting heresy ; and they are altogether consonant with the scriptures.

\* *Vide Crakanth. Advers. Archiep. Spalat. c. 4, p. 19.*

† *Iren. lib. 4, c. 62, p. 292.*

‡ *Cypr. de Unit. Eccles. 2, p. 296.*



We must not suppose, however, that the Christians of Britain were universally corrupted in these perilous times. It is said that many of them fell away, (if only one in a thousand, it was too many,) and that they were restless and uneasy, wandering about from place to place, and causing great trouble to the faithful, who were "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." 1 Cor. i. 10. It was certainly a cause of great grief and sorrow of heart to orthodox Christians, and to the true members of the church, to see false teachers leading the ignorant multitude into this destructive heresy, and persuading them to deny the Lord who bought them. But what could they do at such a time, when the whole Christian world had gone astray? To dispute with the promoters of this doctrine in a friendly manner was useless, because they were arrogant, pedantic, and disposed to wrangle—"Speaking evil of things they knew not"—all their polemical strength consisting in boldly urging their assertions, even though expressive of the most heinous blasphemy: And what blasphemy can be more dangerous and flagrant than that which denies the divinity of the second person in the Trinity? "For this is the true faith, to believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man."

Several assemblies or councils of bishops and clergy were held, at which numerous canons were made, which were afterwards published through every diocese in the kingdom, before the career of this heresy was entirely arrested. The number of canons made and adopted on these occasions is not known, but in general they confirmed the principles established at the council of Nice. It is much to be regretted that the ecclesiastical history written by *Twrog*, in the time of Cadvan, king of North Wales, A.D. 600, has been lost. This book was kept in the church at Celynog in Caernarvonshire, with a black stone instead of a cover or binding. When that church was burnt, it was saved without injury, and on that account received the appellation of *Dibochth*, void of heat.\*

\* The translator has given the correct meaning of this word, but, as it stands in connection with the preceding sentence, we do not think the term is properly applied. Had the appellation of "fire-proof" been given to the book referred to, it would, in our opinion, have been far more applicable.—PUB'S.

Dr. THOMAS WILLIAMS, one of the most learned physicians of his day; declares that he saw this book in the year 1590; but it has now been lost for some centuries. TYSSILIO, who was of royal extraction, and a son of Brochvael Ysgythrog, who fought against the Saxons A.D. 602, also wrote the history of the Primitive Church. There are some portions of this history still extant, if we can judge correctly of an ancient manuscript said to have been written by him. In this it is said that "A prince named Ifor Darian-lydan, (broad shield,) with two bishops, Jorwerth ap Benno and Cadwaladr ap Run, (where their bishopricks were, we are not informed) together with fifteen other pious men, assembled at Gloucester, where they made the following renunciation and confession: 'We renounce the false religion and heresy of Arius, and believe his doctrine to be dishonorable to the divinity of Christ the Lord; and we adhere to the Catholic faith as it was established at Nice, in the full persuasion that it is consistent with the truth.' So the faith was preserved incorruptible, although there were many unbelievers in the kingdom." We should consider this a remarkable testimony respecting the faith of the ancient Britons, and their rejection of the Arian heresy, if we were certain that it was written by Tyssilio:

No sooner, however, did the Britons recover from one plague than they became infected with another, of domestic origin and character; although it is true that, for several years after the abovementioned council, being firmly established in the principles of religion, and following the doctrines of the Church, they had but little controversy respecting the Arian heresy.

The awful circumstances attending the death of Arius had the good effect of retarding the progress of his theory; and his doctrines, being examined and exposed, were denounced by many as odious in their features and dangerous in their influence: nevertheless, the Britons had no sooner expelled one heresy than they embraced another, more specious in appearance, but scarcely less destructive in its effects.

This latter heresy had long been the subject of private conversation, without any design on the part of those who had imbibed it to disturb the peace of the Church. They

considered that the Church erred in attributing the conversion of a sinner solely to the operation of the Spirit of God on the heart, independent of any good propensity in himself, preparatory to a gracious change; in contradistinction from which belief, they maintained that the sinner must work together with God, and submit himself to him in prayer, as it is written: "Ask, and it shall be given—seek, and ye shall find." They supposed that many in their time were too rash and uncharitable in maintaining that God rejected some, and placed them beyond the reach of his mercy in Christ. On the contrary, they held the opinion that God through Christ freely offers salvation to all; and that every man, possessing the freedom of his own judgment and the exercise of his will, was at perfect liberty either to perish for ever through unbelief and unholy living, (which would be his own fault,) or, by implicit obedience to the commands of the Gospel, to be happy throughout eternity; but that, with our own intentions, we must also seek the grace and strength of the Almighty to enable us to stand firm and steadfast. These were the sentiments which they avowed at first, and they were apparently conscientious in support of them; but they went further.

The fomentor of this heresy was a native of North Wales, named MORGAN when at home, because he was born on the sea shore.\* After he went to Italy, however, he changed his name into PELAGIUS—a word of the same signification in Latin as Morgan in Welsh. His personal appearance was unseemly: he was corpulent, had a thick neck, a crooked shoulder, and only one eye; but his mental abilities were extraordinary, his literary and theological acquirements very extensive, and his moral character unimpeachable.† He left

\* Morgan is a compound word—the latter syllable meaning *near*, and the former *the sea*. It is probable that a majority, if not all, of the surnames which are common amongst us had their origin in some peculiar circumstances connected with the individuals to whom they were first given. We have never seen a work professing to contain the derivation of most of these surnames, and we suppose that no such book has been published. We gathered our information respecting the one mentioned above, we believe, from Bailey's English Dictionary.—*Pub's*.

† *Erat in homine et alacritas et vigor Ingenii plane incredibilis. Leland's Comment. vol. 1, p. 34.*

his native country when young, and visited his countrymen at Brittany : from thence he travelled to Italy and Jerusalem, and to many distant places in the East, for the purpose of associating with men of learning and piety.\* It was his practice to journey from town to town, and from one monastery to another, conversing with and consulting the most learned and intelligent men he could hear of. He was suspected of entertaining some erroneous opinions, and, particularly, that *a man might be saved without the grace of God*. But of this he was falsely accused; otherwise, he acted with the most shameful hypocrisy, for he publicly declared, "If any one believes or preaches that the grace of God in Christ is not necessary and essential to the salvation of men, let him be accursed."<sup>†</sup>

In December, A.D. 415, a council was convened at Lyda, a town in Judea, at which fourteen bishops were present, and Pelagius was summoned to answer to the charges of heresy which had been preferred against him. It is needless to insert the names of the bishops by whom he was examined; but we will briefly notice the questions which they proposed to him, and the replies which he made to them.

#### I. *No one can be sinless without having a knowledge of*

\* It is said in the Christian Herald, in the article before referred to, that Pelagius went from Brittany to Rome, "where he and his friend and disciple, Celestius, clandestinely propagated their new opinions. Upon the approach of the Goths, A.D. 410, they retired from Rome, and went first into Sicily, and thence to Africa, where they were more free and successful in the propagation of their doctrines. Pelagius left Celestius at Carthage, and went to Jerusalem, both endeavoring to co-operate effectually in the spread of their theological tenets; but the able writings of Austin, in which their system was duly examined, and its fallacy and evil tendency exposed, blasted their ambitious hopes, and almost in its infancy crushed the monstrous and fatal scheme which these sagacious heresiarchs had devised.

"Notwithstanding the seeming orthodoxy of Pelagius, his artful evasion, his insidious and disingenuous manner of concealing his real views, and the specious color attached to his doctrines, he was nevertheless suspected of entertaining principles destructive to the spirit, and subversive of the fundamental truths, of Christianity; and yet he displayed such dexterity in concealing the most obnoxious parts of his system, that his heretical principles were not detected by the council of Lyda."

† *Vide August. de gratia Christio, c. 2.*

*the law* : Pelagius, dost thou maintain this ? ANSWER. My meaning is misunderstood. I did not say that a man who has a knowledge of the law can be sinless ; but that a man may receive instruction from the law to avoid sin, as it is written, "To the law and to the testimony." Isa. viii. 20.—This is not inconsistent with the doctrine of the Church, said the council.

II. *Every man has the free will to choose the good and avoid the evil* : Is this thy opinion, Pelagius ? ANS. I said that because God will assist any one who chooses that which is good ; but, when a man sins, the blame rests upon himself alone.—Neither is this inconsistent with the doctrine of the church, rejoined the council.

III. *The ungodly shall not be spared in the day of judgment, but shall be cast into everlasting torments of fire and brimstone* : Didst thou say this, Pelagius ? ANS. Yes, verily, as I draw my authority from the Gospel. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment."—This also is consistent with the doctrine of the Church.

IV. *No evil can enter into the thoughts of man* : Didst thou assert this, Pelagius ? ANS. No : what I said was this, that a Christian ought to guard against all evil thoughts.—That, too, is orthodox.

V. *There is a promise of the kingdom of Heaven in the Old Testament* : Didst thou say this, Pelagius ? ANS. Certainly ; and none but a heretic will deny it, for it is written in the book of Daniel, "The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever." vii. 18.—This is in accordance with the doctrine of the Church.

VI. *Man is able to keep himself from sin* : Didst thou say that, Pelagius ? ANS. I certainly said that a man may avoid sinning, and keep the commandments of God, if he seek aid and grace from Him, for so He giveth the ability ; but I never said that any man had kept himself from sin from his youth up.—Pelagius is correct, said the bishops, in stating that it is possible for a Christian, by the aid of God's grace, to keep himself from sinning, and to be blameless in his life.

—I, rejoined Pelagius, worship one God in the Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity, and believe nothing in which the Catholic Church has no faith.—We therefore, answered the council, pronounce thee a member of the Catholic Church.\*

Notwithstanding this confession of Pelagius before the council, to avoid excommunication, his real sentiments were briefly these: “Inasmuch as Jesus Christ gave his life as a ransom for sinners, and satisfied the justice of God for the sins of the world, it is possible for a Christian, by making a proper use of his reason and understanding, to avoid or keep from sin by his own efforts, independent of the grace of God.” These are the sentiments which his opponents lay to his charge: he was therefore either guilty of dissimulation, or he was falsely accused; for he publicly declared his belief that “a Christian, by the grace of God, can avoid sin; for it is written, ‘Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.’ 1 John iii. 9.”

Pelagius received his education at the college of Bangor-is-coed, where he became a monk, and afterwards an abbot. This institution may properly be denominated the mother of all learning. It is not the same Bangor as is now in Caernarvonshire, and the seat of the bishoprick which bears that name; but Bangor in Flintshire, on the river Dee, about twelve miles from Chester. In former times, there was a very extensive monastery at this place. In addition to the students who were learning the sciences, there were 2400 religious persons who read the service in rotation, a hundred at a time, every hour in the twenty-four; so that the worship of God was continued by day and night throughout the year.†

But the disciples and followers of Pelagius went far beyond the prudence and discretion of their teacher. If he whispered erroneous opinions in privacy, they published them, as with the voice of a trumpet, to the whole world. Pelagius, at times, would zealously vindicate the doctrine of the grace of God. “Let him be accursed,” he would say, “who

\* *Vide Uss. Ecl. Britann. Antiq. c. 9, p. 129, &c.*

† *MS. Hengwert:*

will believe or affirm that the grace of God in Christ is not necessary every hour and minute of our lives, to render our actions acceptable in His sight. Ho who denies this is deserving of everlasting torments.”\* This was the language of a true Christian, correctly informed in the faith, had he always entertained and expressed the same belief; but historians do not say that his disciples were as respectful in their opinions on the subject of divine grace. They were the authors of the following erroneous tenets, although they disavowed the authorship, and endeavored to father it upon Pelagius: 1st. That Adam was created mortal, and that his body would have returned to the dust, even if he had never sinned: 2d. That man is free from original sin, because Adam’s disobedience affected himself alone, and could have no influence upon his posterity: 3d. That salvation cometh by the law as well as by the gospel: 4th. That some persons, prior to the incarnation of Christ, were without sin: 5th. That new-born infants are in the same state of innocence as Adam before the fall: 6th. That death is not the necessary and natural consequence of Adam’s transgression; nor is the final resurrection the result and consequence of the resurrection of Christ: 7th. That it is practicable for man to live without sin, and to obey the commandments of God, without His gracious assistance.†

Such were the false principles that were disseminated amongst the Britons after the death of Pelagius; for he himself never returned to Britain. The direct tendency of these principles was to produce self-confidence, self-sufficiency, presumption, and a reliance upon the law; for although a man’s intention be ever so good, yet, without grace to sanctify the obdurate heart, nature is weak, corrupt, and ready to fall: although “the spirit is willing, yet the flesh is weak,” as we may learn from the example of Peter, who denied his Lord and Master, notwithstanding his repeated asseverations, “Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.”

\* *Anathemo qui vel sentit vel dicit gratiam Dei—non solum per singulas horas, aut per singula momenta, sed etiam per singulos actus nostros, non esse necessarium, &c. Vide Uss. Antiq. c. 9, p. 156.*

† *Vide Uss. Brit. Eccles. Antiq. c. 9, p. 117, 118.*

These erroneous doctrines were introduced into Britain by **AGRICOLA**, A.D. 425. He was the son of an eloquent bishop, and a youth of excellent parts. He exerted his powers to a considerable degree in advocating and spreading the doctrines of Pelagius, maintaining the orthodoxy of his views, and boasting of his distinguished reputation throughout Christendom for learning and piety. Notwithstanding the popular talents of Agricola, and the interest which was excited when he was announced to preach, (which was so great that thousands flocked to hear him,) he succeeded in raising but a small number of proselytes, as **BEDA**, the English historian, admits ;\* and he, it is well known, said as little in favor of the Britons as he possibly could. He had under his direction numerous exhorters, who are represented to have been rash, imprudent, self-willed, without either learning or authority—deficiencies which were more than counterbalanced by their audacity. They “crept into houses, and led captive silly women, ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” *2 Tim.* iii. 6. These, having, it is true, a form of godliness, succeeded in imposing upon the unstable, and making a few disciples, who, “like children tressed to and fro, were carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lay in wait to deceive.” *Eph.* iv. 14.

But this was the misfortune of the Britons generally at this period : they were weak and feeble Christians, not grounded and established on the principles of religion. The frequent incursions and attacks of the Picts, the Irish, the French, and the Saxons, like sudden storms of thunder and lightning, kept the Britons in continual apprehension, and had a constant tendency to harass their minds and weaken their faith. When Agricola and his wandering exhorters preached salvation through a crucified Saviour, the doctrine was received with decided satisfaction by the people, for it was one in which they had been taught to believe from their infancy ; but, when they changed their plan of operations, (for they were cunning enough to be guarded in their expressions at first,) and insisted that man could be saved by his own strength and his own endeavors, they were alarmed, though they knew not how to gainsay or contradict such an opinion.

\* *Bed. Hist. Eccl. l. 1, c. 17.*



They therefore acted wisely (inasmuch as there was so great a lack of knowledge at home) in sending messengers to their countrymen in Brittany, requesting them to send over some of their pious and learned men, to argue with these propagators of false doctrine, who, by fair words and dissembled holiness, were endeavoring to overturn the Christian faith.

The messengers were received with every mark of kindness and respect by the Church in France, who, to manifest their willingness and readiness to assist their brethren, called an assembly, in order to select men of honest and good report, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, to undertake the mission to Britain. In accordance with the wishes of the Church, the choice fell upon GARMON, bishop of Alet-y-sodor,\* and Lurus, bishop of Treicastell,† who were devout men, well-informed, and mighty in the scriptures. When they had embarked, and had completed nearly half their voyage, (it is said,) a terrible storm, accompanied with contrary winds, arose, which tossed the ship here and there until it was ready to sink. Garmon at this time was sleeping quietly upon his pillow. The crew of the ship awakened him, and said, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" The holy man arose, directed them all to humble themselves before God, and, having poured out his soul in prayer, in the fullness of faith, and hope, and trust in divine providence, took a handful of water and poured it into the sea, saying, "Peace, be still, in the name of the blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." "Immediately the wind ceased, and there was a great calm;" and soon after "they were brought into the desired haven."‡ After landing, the bishops were not idle: they preached the truths of the Gospel diligently and fervently to the common people in Welsh, (for there was but little difference between the language of the inhabitants of France, that is, the inhabitants of Brittany, and the old inhabitants of this island,) and to the learned in Latin—for Latin was spoken occasionally in France and Britain in those times, as English is at this time in Wales. They certainly had great labor on their hands, such as it was not in

\* *Altisodorensis*. † *Trecassensis*. ‡ *Bed. Hist. Eccles.* l. 1, c. 17.

the power of man to perform, except their trust had been in God; for, besides the corrupt principles which the false teachers had sown amongst those who professed Christianity, idolatry had taken strong hold in the kingdom—but, the greater the opposition, the more these two bishops relied upon God. Their practice was to travel from one place to another, and preach the necessity of the grace of God to assist the weakness of nature, notwithstanding Christ Jesus had made full satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins of the world; and to expose the self-presumption and bad dispositions that lay concealed and were mixed with our good intentions, without assistance from “on high.” And the Lord God was pleased to grant his Spirit to co-operate with their labor and diligence in preaching the word. “Paul planted and Apollos watered, but God gave the increase;” so here, by the blessing of God, who “gave testimony to the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by the hands” (*Acts* xiv. 3) of these two bishops, infidels were gained over to the faith, and the orthodox were confirmed therein; the weak were strengthened, and those who formerly despised the grace of God were brought to see their mistake, and to feel like the great apostle Paul did when he said, “Not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” *I. Cor.* xv. 10.

The false teachers, Agricola and his exhorters, upon this retreated and hid themselves, like owls when the dawn appears: but they did not continue long in their hiding places, before they took fresh courage, and sent a messenger to the two bishops, to inform them that they wished to converse with them about those texts of scripture which were in dispute between them. They accordingly met at London on an appointed day—the false teachers in very pompous apparel,\* shining silk, &c., and the bishops in coats of a darkish color, short cloaks of changeable crimson hanging over their shoulders, according to the custom of those times. The false teachers being the most numerous began their oration, and continued about an hour “magnifying the power of the faculties of the soul, and telling how many meritorious things a man could do if he would follow his reason and consult his judgment; and further, that his carelessness and inattention were the causes of his transgression.” Garmon then explain-

\* *Veste fulgentes. Const. Vit. Garm. l. 1, c. 23.*

ed the awful changes made in the soul of Adam subsequent to his transgression : instead of rectitude of heart, he had now a strong inclination to sin ; and, instead of that serenity and peace of mind which were a perpetual feast to his soul before, he had nothing within him now but a guilty conscience, rage, and unruly lusts, tumultuous thoughts and gnawings of conscience. Now (said he) this is what the scriptures mean by the *old man*—even the lusts of the flesh, covetousness, the propensity to evil which is in us, and which we had from our progenitor, because as the branches are of the same nature as the stock from which they grow, so we, the offspring of Adam, are partakers of the same evil and corrupt nature which he possessed after he had sinned. So it is evident that the first part of the birth of a Christian is to cast away these wicked propensities, which are so intent upon having dominion over him ; but he is not to engage in this work in his own strength alone, for nature is very feeble and corrupt, and the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. *Gen. viii. 21.* We ought therefore to pray for the strength and grace of God to assist our good intentions, as it is written : " My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." *2 Cor. xviii. 9.* By saying this and much more, all the people were greatly comforted, and some were so angry with the false teachers and exhorters that they wished to destroy them, but Garmon and Lupus pacified them.

Shortly after the abovementioned debate, these two good men came to Oswestry, where they met with a bigot living sumptuously every day, who began to blaspheme the doctrine of divine grace, and to mock and ridicule the bishops. Not long after this, the earth beneath and around his palace fell in, and became a pool of water.\* It is called to this day *Llynge-lys*.

We next hear of their being at Mold, in Flintshire. At that time, A. D. 427, the Picts, the Germans, and the Saxons were destroying, robbing, killing, and burning from one end of the kingdom to the other. The Britons had a numerous army of brave men, ready to encounter the enemy ; but before they went to the field, the greatest part of the troops

\* *Humph. Lloyd's Brev. of Britain*, p. 69. 6.

applied for baptism, and very many of the country people were baptized daily, when Garmon and Lupus preached to them.\*

Some may be inclined to ask if infants were baptized in that age in Britain. What was the reason that these soldiers were not baptized in their infancy, for the greatest part of the army were baptized by Garmon and Lupus? I reply :

1st. This certainly shows that a great part of the kingdom had not as yet been converted to Christianity, as we have already seen by the testimony of the assembly which met at Gloucester to discuss the merits of the Arian heresy, in the passage which says that "There were many pagans yet in the kingdom." It is not at all surprising that there was so much ignorance at this time, when we consider the continual assaults and attacks of the Picts, the Saxons, and other barbarians, who were enemies to the Christian religion, and who, more than all others, martyred the bishops and clergy ; and our wonder will be still more diminished, when we reflect that the people had lost their teachers, and were naturally terrified by the tortures and sufferings they had endured, into an avowal of paganism, in order to preserve their own lives. And again, many of the clergy who survived were very weak and unlearned ; so much so, indeed, that they were obliged to send to France for assistance against the Pelagian heresy, which was so injurious to the life of a real Christian.

2dly. We read that our countryman, Pelagius, was at an assembly in Italy, where he was called to an account respecting his sentiments ; and, inasmuch as he was suspected of denying original sin, it was thought that he might also deny infant baptism. His sentiments were demanded in this public assembly, which he gave in the following words : " I should truly be a heretic of the worst description, if I denied the baptism of infants, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. How wicked must he be who would attempt to keep them out of the church of Christ on earth, and would oppose the practice of the Catholic church since the time of the apostles to this day ! As it respects myself, I never had a doubt

\* *Bed. Hist. Eccles. l. 1. c. 20.*

respecting infant baptism; and verily I never heard of any dispute or interference, at any time, in opposition to the baptising of the infants of the faithful."\* Thus Pelagius declares that he never knew of any dispute in any part of Christendom respecting the admission of the infants of the faithful to baptism; but, if the Church in Britain had been opposed to infant baptism, he would have heard of this at home, as he was a native of North Wales.

3dly. The ancient Fathers agree in asserting that the Britons were orthodox in their belief, with the exception of the corruption they imbibed from the heresy of Arius, who was favorable to infant baptism; and they further testify that the practice of the Church of Christ in baptising infants was a tradition or doctrine which had been received from the apostles. ORIGEN, who wrote about the year 230, in his exposition of *Psalm* lv. 5, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," says, "It was because of this original sin that the Church received a tradition from the apostles to baptize infants; and doubtless this is one of the traditions to which the apostle refers in 2. *Thess.* ii. 15, 'Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or by epistle.'"

This is sufficient to show that infant baptism was practised amongst the ancient Britons, as amongst all other Christians throughout the world.

We now return to Garmon and Lupus, of whom ancient historians relate that, "Whatever they said with their tongues was daily confirmed by the miracles which God wrought by them." It is said that they healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, quenched the violence of fire. But, to say no more on this subject, they performed two other acts which were very serviceable to the Britons, besides establishing them in the principles of religion, and which ought to be kept in remembrance. 1st. They made arrangements to have schoolhouses erected for the encouragement of literature: 2dly. They furnished the Britons with a form of common prayer, which they had brought with them.

\* *Vid. Uss. Antiq. Eccles. Brit. Antiq. c. 10. p. 147. &c.*

The clergy of Britain were "unlearned and unstable" at this time: they were only "children in understanding," unacquainted the scriptures and true divinity. This was the cause of their being unable to converse or argue with confidence, lest they should give occasion to their enemies to triumph over them. So Garmon and Lupus, by the assistance of many princes and lords, who were favorably inclined towards religion, established numerous schools through England and Wales, where devout and learned men were employed as teachers, to qualify young men for the work of the ministry. The two most distinguished men who were engaged in this work were DYFRIG and ILLTUD, both gifted and intelligent men, full of the most fervent and pious zeal, and anxious to be useful in their day and generation. Dyfrig opened his school first in Carleon, in Monmouth; (the metropolis of Wales, at that period, as we have before observed,) where not only the sons of common men became pupils, but those also of the nobility were instructed in the higher branches of literature and science, such as astronomy, philosophy, &c. He sometimes taught at *Hinllan*, on the river Wy; at other times at *Moch-rhos*. It is said that he had occasionally about a thousand pupils. The great *TEILO*, the second bishop of Llandaf, who so vigorously vindicated the grace of God at an assembly held A. D. 492, at Llan-Ddewi-Brefi, was one of his students. CADOC, the son of Cynlas, lord of Glamorgan, who was the first Abbot at Llancaulan, also studied under him, together with hundreds of other men of renown, whose names have not been handed down to us. Dyfrig, when he saw the seed of education which he had sown likely to produce such abundance of good fruit, resigned his charge into other hands, was consecrated bishop of Llandaf, and afterwards promoted to the archbishoprick of Carleon.\*

Illtud, also, in Glamorgan, was indefatigable in his efforts to restore religion and good morals. SAMSON, one of his pupils, was a man of extensive knowledge, although he was the occasion of much injury and loss to his country, by taking with him to Brittany (where he was made archbishop) all the Welsh books which he could get into his possession. Gildas was also one of his students: he wrote a short history of the Britons. Amongst hundreds of others, were DEWI, the

\* *Leland. de Script Britan. vol. 1. p. 50.*

archbishop, and PAWLIN, who was buried at Llansawil, and on whose gravestone is the following epitaph: "Servator Fidei, Patriæ Semper Amator, Hic Paulinus jacet, Cultor pientissimus æqui;" the translation of which is, "Here lieth Pawlin, the preserver of the faith, a lover of his country, and a conscientious vindicator of whatever was just and equitable."

Bangor-is-y-Coed, in North Wales, received her portion of the care and assistance of Garmon, who was instrumental in settling AIDAN there as an overseer and teacher of others. Aidan was a son of Gwyrnyw, and a great grandson to Urien-Raged, the prince of North Wales. In short, Bangor-is-y-Coed and Carleon were the two principal universities in Wales, and were superior to any at that time in England, because the latter was more exposed to the assaults and attacks of enemies, and to disturbances of various kinds, sometimes accompanied with the shedding of blood, than the former.

The second service rendered by Garmon and Lupus for the benefit of the Church was the furnishing them with a very excellent form of prayer, which had been used by the Church in France from the time of the apostles. There is a special account of the order of the church service on holidays; but we are not so well informed of its order on the Lord's day. On the holidays, the service was introduced with the confession; then succeeded the collect appointed for the day: afterwards, something would be said of the martyr whose memory was celebrated, with a fervent prayer for the grace of God, to enable them to imitate him as far as he had followed the example of Jesus Christ. The sermon would then follow, or an address setting forth the most distinguishing graces—the devotion, zeal, patience, &c. of the saint, and how absolutely necessary is the fruit or assistance of the spirit in order to lead a Christian life. Then the collect would follow, praying for the grace of God to unite and keep his worshippers from heresy and schism. A collect would then be read for the consecration of the bread and wine in the communion; and, after partaking thereof, another prayer for a blessing on their exercises. To these would be added the Lord's Prayer, and then the benediction. There was no superstition in these prayers—no prayer for the dead, or supplication directed to any

departed saint. It was the life of the saints alone that was mentioned in the sermon, with a serious admonition to the living to imitate them, according to the exhortation of St. Paul: "Wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me." 1 Cor. iv. 16. The ancient Fathers of the Church unite in their belief that this form of prayer was composed by some of the apostles, or by some other pious men of that age, although orthodox bishops may have made some additions to them since, as the state of the Church might require; and it was out of this form principally that the "Book of Common Prayer" was collected, and not from the Mass book of the Papists, as the dissenters foolishly imagine, for want of better information.\*

When Garmon and Lupus had arranged matters thus satisfactorily, every thing having the appearance of safety and stability, they returned home to France. The false teachers and their exhorters recommenced their attempts, but they might as well have left their fiddle in its case, for its sound was discordant, possessing no more melody than the harsh and grating sound of a grindstone.

It was, however, thought advisable to send another messenger to beseech Garmon to revisit Britain, because the false teachers were still by their cunning and craftiness endeavoring to overturn the faith. The Britons were fully persuaded that the Lord had "given him on his first visit mouth and wisdom, which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist." Luke xxi. 15. Garmon (to give further evidence of his willingness to assist them) sailed without delay to Britain, bringing with him SEVERUS, bishop of Tre-hir, who was an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures. The two bishops set about the work which they had been sent to perform with alacrity and vigor; and having silenced Agricola and his adherents, they were sent out of the kingdom, in order that the Church in Britain, if possible, might enjoy peace henceforward—the Britons at the same time praising God for the comforts they had received by attending to the sound doctrines of these two servants of God. "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." Gal. iv. 18.

\* *Stillingfl. Orig. Britan. c. 4. p. 232—237.*



CHAPTER III. *Revival of the Pelagian Heresy—The Assembly at Llan-ddewi-brefi—Dewi and Gildas—The Plague—Augustine, the Monk, preaching to the English—The corruption of the Church of Rome—The Bishops of Britain conversing with Augustine—The Martyrdom of the Monks of Bangor-is-y-coed.*

We left the church in Britain in the enjoyment of repose and peace, purified from its dross, and keeping the unity of the faith. At this time peace and prosperity prevailed throughout the kingdom, as it is written: "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." *Psalms*, cxix. 165. It is remarked respecting the ancient Britons that no stratagem or assault of any enemy could succeed against them, so long as they remained with God, and worshipped him in the beauty of holiness; but that all manner of wanderers and marauders, such as the Picts, the French, &c. could overpower them when they "walked according to the imaginations of their evil hearts," as it is written: "But if they turn away, and forsake my statutes and my commandments, then will I pluck them up by the roots out of the land which I have given them." *2 Chron.* vii. 19.

Nothing remarkable in relation to religion occurred after the last departure of St. Harman, (for so he is surnamed,) until the Saxons came to this island at the invitation of Vortigern, and became a severe scourge in the hand of the Lord to punish the wickedness of the country. Gildas remarks: "It was the foolishness and madness of the king and his counsellors (who invited them to Britain) that was the cause of this calamity." Beda, the English historian, says that God in his providence made use of them as his instruments to punish the wicked inhabitants of the kingdom." The two writers, notwithstanding their different sentiments and inclinations, were certainly agreed upon this point; for, had it not been that the Britons were rendered almost insensible by the righteous judgment of God on account of their aggravated sins, they could not have been as stupid, as thoughtless, as infatuated, as they were on this occasion. But "Judgments are prepared for scorers, and stripes for the back of fools."

*Prov. xix. 29.* It would have been as wise an act to leave a pack of wolves to protect a flock of sheep, as it was in the Britons to call in the aid of the Saxons against the assaults of their enemies, as they soon learned by sad experience; for they, instead of fighting with the enemy according to their agreement, made peace with them, and, like so many accursed traitors, turned their weapons upon their employers. The Britons were unprepared for such treachery, expecting the Saxons to assist and not betray them, inasmuch as they were hired servants under them. So, when there was no one amongst the Britons who could raise a hand against the Saxons and the Picts, the latter rushed upon the unarmed inhabitants, piercing and stabbing them with long knives and swords—sparing neither old nor young, male nor female, excepting such only as were able to escape from their fury and conceal themselves in caves and deserts. Many fled to fortified towns, churches and monasteries; but these were soon burnt to the ground, and the wretched creatures who were within envied the happy death of those who had been slain with the sword. Such, indeed, was the frightful slaughter in all parts of the kingdom, especially in England, that nothing but a miracle could have preserved the Britons from utter destruction as a nation: for the Saxons, having killed and burnt until they were tired, returned suddenly to Germany, as related in the first part of this work. “O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still.” *Jer. xviii. 6.*

Notwithstanding the immense number of men, women, and children, who were slain in this treacherous massacre, there were still some remaining, having found safety and concealment in mountains, deserts, or caves. This deadly stroke fell heavily upon the inhabitants of Kent and the surrounding country, on the banks of the Thames, and from thence to London, Oxford, and their vicinities. Those who resided in the remote corners of the kingdom were ignorant (except from report) of the extent of the calamity; and between them and the remnant left of the inhabitants of Wales, Cornwall, and the north of England, they soon raised an army of more than twenty thousand men. When the Saxons returned, with the expectation, doubtless, of renewing their depredations, they were obliged to retreat with loss and shame. But after the Britons had commenced rebuilding their churches, their hon-

ses, and their cities, and were about to enjoy the blessings of peace and repose, they began (and this was always their misfortune) to dispute amongst themselves ; and the doctrine of Pelagius, which, it might have been thought, had been long ago buried in oblivion, was revived to some considerable extent.

But the seeds of this heresy were rooted up, before they had attained sufficient strength to injure the true faith, for Dyfrig, archbishop of Carleon, caused the bishops and clergy of Wales to meet at a place afterwards called Llan-ddewi Brefi, in Cardiganshire, (because it was in South Wales that this heresy had revived,) to take measures for the vindication of the Catholic faith, and the establishment of the genuine principles of religion. Accordingly, the bishops and clergy convened ; amongst whom were Teilo, Padorn, Pawlin, Cadoc, and Dewi, and many others,—all men of ability, and highly respected for their holy conversation and piety. But the solemn, evangelical, and eloquent address of Dewi, in pre-eminence to the rest, warmed the hearts of the assembly, until they were ready to magnify the grace of God ; for he exposed the folly and presumption of confiding in good intentions, independent of divine assistance, so plainly, that all who heard him received comfort and edification. It may truly be said that his discourse “ ministered grace unto the hearers.” This assembly met A. D. 492.

But lest any one should think that I misrepresent the historian, I will insert the account entire in his own words. “ The Pelagian heresy ;” said he, “ had greatly revived since the departure of Garmon from the island. This was the cause of the meeting of the Assembly at Llan-ddewi-Brefi, where not only the bishops and clergy met together, but also many of the nobility. At this meeting, the orthodox bishops were very diligent, preaching to the people, and endeavoring to restore them from their errors ; but they did not succeed—the false teachers having gained many proselytes, who were all adhering immoveably to the false doctrine they had taken up. Bishop Pawlin, when he discovered this, sent a messenger to Dewi, to beseech him to attend at the assembly, for all knew that he was a mighty man in vindication of the truth : but Dewi could not attend at this time, for the holy man had entirely devoted himself to heavenly meditations. At last ;

however, Dyfrig, the archbishop, and Daniel, Bishop of Bangor, condescended to wait upon him in person, and he, in the spirit, knew that they were on the road, hastening to him, and that the cause required his presence. He therefore went with them, "doubting nothing." As they approached the end of their journey, and were within sight of Llan-Ddewi-Brefi, they met a widow who was weeping bitterly for her son who recently died, and was about to be buried. When she saw that Dewi was going that way, she ran to him, and earnestly besought him to pray to God that he would be pleased to restore her son to life again. Dewi, upon this, hastened to the bier, bedewed the face of the corpse with his tears, and, calling on the name of Christ, the young man was revived in the presence of all, to their utter astonishment; and he delivered him perfectly well to his mother.\* The young man at this time refused to return home with his mother, and nothing would satisfy him but to accompany Dewi to the Assembly. The holy man complied with his wish, and gave him his Bible (without which he would go to no place,) to carry. He put it on his shoulder, and brought it to the Assembly. Then Dewi (to the very great comfort of all the faithful,) preached the word of God to the people in the open air; and on the summit of the hill where they stood, a church was built, and consecrated to the honor of Dewi: it is called to this day Llan-Ddewi-Brefi."

Whether these miracles, with many others of which tradition speaks, were actually performed, I am unable to say; but there is no doubt that Dewi was a man of very extensive literary and theological knowledge, and that his conversation was in heaven, whilst he sojourned on earth. His future greatness and excellence were predicted before his birth, as will appear from the following remarkable occurrence. When Gildas was preaching in the church of Llan-y-Morfa, a woman named Nonraslawn, who was pregnant at the time with Dewi, entered the church during the service. Gildas immediately became dumb, and was unable to proceed with his discourse. The audience were greatly astonished at the sudden impediment of the preacher, and inquired the cause. "It is true (said Gildas) that I can address you in common con-

\* Girard. *Vit. St. David*, apud Wharton. *Anglia Sacra* p. 659.

versation, but I cannot preach, nor can I explain the reason.\* Be pleased, however, to withdraw for a time, that I may see what I can effect alone." When the congregation had gone out of the church, Gildas again attempted to preach, but in vain, every successive trial proving abortive. At length, in the greatest terror and concern, he exclaimed, "If any one be concealed in this house, I charge him or her, by the Living God, to come forth." Upon this, Nonraslawn, who had been sitting in some secret place, meditating upon the words of the preacher, presented herself, and, with a reverential bow, replied to his call in the following manner: "There is no one here except me, my lord, who have been sitting in this place, listening to the holy words which have dropped from your lips." Gildas was then persuaded that the child which was born of her would be more exalted than he; so he requested her to withdraw, and proceeded with his discourse without any further impediment or difficulty.

Soon after the breaking up of the assembly at Llan-Ddewi-Brefi, Dyfrig, the archbishop, was desirous, on account of his advanced age and bodily infirmities, to resign his charge, the duties of which were too weighty and numerous for his declining powers. DEWI AP SANT, lord of Cardigan, and an uncle of king Arthur, was therefore consecrated to his holy office; but as Carleon, in Monmouthshire, (the seat of the archbishoprick,) was filled with noise and confusion, and was moreover the chief resort of strangers and the gentry of the country, (attracted thereto by the king's court, which was occasionally held there,) the new incumbent moved the seat of his diocess to Ty-Ddewi,† in Pembrokeshire, where he expected to enjoy that quietness and retiracy which were so essential to the full discharge of his sacred and important duties. Twenty-five archbishops, in succession, resided in this place until about the year 1100, when the privelege of giving title to an archbishoprick was wrested from it, by the unfair intrusion and violent usurpation of another which had had no possible right to such a distinction. Dewi, its first archbishop, died at the very advanced age of one hundred

\* *Ego quidem communi loquela vos alloqui possum, praeedicare vero, nulla tenus possum.* Girald. p. 630.

† Now St. David's.

and forty-seven,\* and, "like a sheaf of wheat fully ripe, was gathered into the garner of the Lord?"

For a considerable length of time after this, the country enjoyed the blessings of tranquillity and repose. Kings were anointed in England and Ireland, and they prospered, because they followed that which was good: for "Mercy and truth preserve the king, and his throne is upholden by mercy." *Prov. xx. 28.*† Just and upright judges were appointed in various districts, to decide all disputes and controversies; and pious ministers were ordained to dispense to the Church of Christ the bread of eternal life. But when another generation arose, who studied nothing but present ease and prosperity, and had no persecution or tribulation to excite them to good and holy deeds, every thing assumed an appearance of confusion and disorder. The kings became cruel and oppressive, and ruled their subjects as with a rod of iron. The judges were mercenary, and sold their decisions for money, in imitation of the example of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness. The priests, too,—they who, above all others, should have been exemplary in the discharge of their duties—like Zechariah's idle shepherd, deserted their flocks, and suffered them to wander at pleasure over the barren mountains of unbelief, where they could find no spiritual food to nourish their souls, but where rank and offensive weeds and plants sprang up at every step, and shed their poisonous influence on all surrounding objects. The people, as a natural consequence of the neglect and indifference of their civil and religious rulers, soon gave a loose rein to their appetites and passions, and indulged in every species of unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, and malice. In short, they fully verified the words of the poet, "*In facies jurasse putes:*" that is, as if they had vowed to follow

\* *Iceland. de Script. Britan. vol. 1, p. 50.*

† The sentiment contained in this passage is similar to the one expressed by a popular English poet, (Dryden, we believe,) in the following lines:

"But let the bold conspirator beware,  
For Heaven makes princes its peculiar care."

If construed literally, this sentiment may not prove very acceptable to an American; but the substitution of "rulers" for "princes" will render it perfectly agreeable.—*Pub's.*

all manner of sin and wickedness. It is not surprising, therefore, that the judgments of the Lord were poured out against them. "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord; and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" *Jer. v. 9.* When the sins of the Britons had attained their *acme*, the Lord sent amongst them a plague, called in Welsh *fall felen*, a species of yellow fever.\* The section of country where this plague prevailed to the greatest extent, and was most fatal in its effects, (including nearly the whole of Wales,) was under the dominion of MAELGWYN GWYNEDD, the son of Caswallon Llaw-hir. England, however, was by no means exempt from this dreadful affliction; for a great multitude of the inhabitants were smitten with the plague and died. King Maelgwyn at first was a man well disposed towards the Church, in defence of which, and the general interests of the country, he was both able and willing to exercise his sword; but it is probable that in his latter days he went astray from the path in which he had previously walked, from too strong an attachment to his son RUUN, whom (with a negligenco like that which Eli of old manifested towards his children) he permitted to commit what excesses he pleased, without correction or restraint. On this account, Gildas speaks of him in terms of harshness and unkindness:† Taliesin curses him, and says:

MAY no favor be shewn to Maelgwyn, the king—  
 No minstrel his praises in poesy sing;  
 May no grace from above e'er inhabit his breast,  
 For he hath not his son's evil habits repressed.  
 When he walked in the path which was tending to death,  
 And curses fell from him with every breath,  
 He used not the rod which a father should use,  
 When his children parental obedience refuse.  
 May his days on the earth be unhappy and few,  
 And his fields, where abundance and beauty once grew,  
 Be desolate, barren, and unfair to the view!

One of Maelgwyn's sons was named CEREDIG, and from him, being lord of the place, that part of South Wales was called *Ceredigion*—now commonly termed Cardiganshire.

\* *Vide Uss. Eccles. Brit. Antiq. c. 14, p. 290.*

† *Gild. de Excid. Britann. p. 29.*

But to return : When the Lord had smitten the country with such an awful plague, and so many thousands of its inhabitants had fallen beneath its desolating ravages, the Saxons found no difficulty in conquering and subjugating the remainder. A great number of the Britons sailed over to their countrymen in Brittany, to escape from the unhealthy atmosphere which hovered around their own dwellings ; so that, between the number of those who died by the plague and of those who emigrated to Brittany, the country was nearly drained of its population—so much so, indeed, that but a very small body could be found to withstand the forces of the Saxons. It is evident, therefore, that it was not by their strength, or by their cunning, that they subjugated the Britons ; but by the force of circumstances, which God in his righteous judgment had brought to bear against the inhabitants, for their daring impiety and hardness of heart.\* “Because they forgot the multitude of his mercies, they fell in the day of his vengeance.” Thus the Britons lost the crown of England, which they had held in their possession upwards of 1827 years.

When the Saxons had usurped the crown of England, and had secured themselves in the government of the country, (notwithstanding the unjust manner in which they effected it,) Pope GREGORY, A.D. 596, about 150 years after the Saxons came to Britain, sent AUGUSTINE the Monk to preach the Gospel to them ; for, as yet, they were universally illiterate, and without any knowledge of the true God or of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

This monk was not St. Augustine, the bishop of Hippo, a city of Africa. Bishop Augustine was one of the ancient Fathers of the Church, and a man of exemplary piety, of extensive literary acquirements, and of sound, undeviating, uncompromising faith. Augustine the monk was a tall, slender, lean man in person ; as to his faculties, he was like one of the pharisees mentioned in the scriptures, and had a haughty and arrogant appearance. He was envious and blood-thirsty, as his subsequent conduct in Britain plainly exemplified. When he first landed, he displayed some of the imposing pageantry of his vocation. A man carrying a

\* *Vide Nenn, de Reb. Gest. Brit. c. 45.*



large silver cross, and another bearing the image of Christ painted on a board, walked before him.\* This was mere pomp and ceremony.

The Church of Rome, at this time, had not only outwardly adorned herself with vain and superstitious ceremonies, which were injurious to the power and influence of true religion, but she had also become corrupt in her doctrine; for, 1st. In addition to the worship of Jesus Christ, her pastors had introduced the practice of praying to the saints, both male and female: 2d. Besides Heaven and Hell, (the final scenes of rewards and punishments,) they had invented a third place, which they called Purgatory: 3d. The priests were forbidden to marry, although the practice had not as yet become universal: 4th. The bishop of Rome claimed authority over all the other bishops in Christendom. Some say that he had not at this time attained his full power, but had taken the prime step to his exaltation: 5th. They mixed salt† with the water in baptism: 6th. Images were introduced into the churches, although the practice of bowing down before them was as yet but partially observed: 7th. They inculcated the belief

\* We beg leave, in this place, to repeat a remark made in our preface. We disclaim any and all responsibility for the opinions of the author of this history. We publish them as they are, more for the sake of giving a correct translation of the original, than from a desire to manifest any participation in the sentiments they contain. Were we to omit all the passages which do not coincide with our own opinions, (particularly in this part of the work, where sentiments are advanced in relation to peculiar points of religious belief,) we should leave but a small portion of the work unutilized. If, therefore, any one of our readers should meet with sentiments which are not only opposed to his own, but are absolutely derogatory, in his opinion, to the faith which he professes, we trust he will not attribute any blame to us. In the remarks which are scattered through the subsequent part of this work relative to the Catholic Church, its doctrines, and its members, those who hold to that faith will find some things which are unpalatable; but, when they take into consideration that the author wrote (as did all others who attempted the history of the early ages under the disadvantages of only partial information, we think they will not only exempt him from the charge of prejudice and misrepresentation, but *ourselves* also from that of participating in his feelings or sentiments.—PUB'S.

† "Charmed salt" would be the literal translation.—*Translator.*

that every piece of wood or stone in the shape of a cross had the virtue of performing miracles.

These things are thus related in an old Welsh chronicle :—  
 “ The Christianity which Augustine introduced amongst the English had degenerated essentially from the purity of the Gospel : it transcended the limits of the Church of Christ, and abounded in superfluous rites, human ordinances, and unmeaning ceremonies, contrary to the simplicity inculcated in the precepts of our Saviour ; such, for instance, as crosses and images, praying to deceased saints, the supremacy of the Pope, the commingling of water and salt in baptism, and other unintelligible, unspiritual, and frivolous practices. Such was the corrupt garb in which Augustine introduced the Christian religion to the notice and consideration of the Saxons.” This testimony is furnished by the Right Reverend Father, RICHARD DAVIES, D.D., bishop of St. David's, in his preface to the first Welsh edition of the New Testament, printed A.D. 1567.

It is not my intention to give a history of the success which attended the preaching of Augustine to the Saxons. As a reward for the zeal and perseverance with which he disseminated the corrupt doctrines of the Romish church, the Pope was pleased to confer upon him the title of Archbishop of Britain. This was the first attempt of the Pope to exercise authority in this country. As soon as Augustine was elevated to his exalted station, he sent for the bishops of Britain, in the hope of persuading them to acknowledge the Pope as the head Pastor of the universal Church, and himself as the archbishop of all Britain, under the instructions and authority of his master. DYNAWT, the abbot of Bangor-is-y-coed, with many others of the clergy, in compliance with the invitation, met together at the place appointed, for the express purpose of discussing the novel claims which he and the Pope had asserted. Dynawt, “ a man approved of God,” and “ who rightly divided the truth,” replied to Augustine in the following words : “ Be it known to you, that we consider it our duty to obey and submit to the Church of God, to the Pope of Rome, and to every good Christian—to love them in every situation and under all circumstances, and to assist all, both by word and deed, in becoming children of the Lord. We know of no other obedience to him whom you call Pope,

or Father ; and this we are prepared to render to him and to every Christian for ever. Beyond this, we are subject to the archbishop of Carleon, who is a guide and an overseer, under God, to direct and keep us in the spiritual path.”\* This is an excellent testimony against Popery ; for Dynawt, in the name of his brethren, asserts that they were ready to assist and love the Pope of Rome, if he were a true Christian, as they charitably judged him to be : but they knew of no other manifestations of attachment that were due to him. “ We are (said they) under the direction of the archbishop of Carleon, who is our superintendent in the hands of God.”

When Augustine heard this fearless expression of the sentiments of the British clergy, he was persuaded that the Pope would not be acknowledged by them as the head of the Catholic Church, nor himself be recognised as archbishop of the Church in Britain. He was highly displeased at the freedom of their remarks, and answered them in a tone of harshness and severity. “ Inasmuch as ye refuse to acknowledge the Pope as the head of the Catholic Church, and obstinately adhere to your own peculiar practices, prove the truth of your principles by the performance of some miracles.” Thereupon, an old blind Englishman was brought to them, to ascertain whether they could restore his sight : when they confessed their inability, Augustine undertook the work, and prayed, and immediately the man received his sight.† It might have been supposed that the gift of tongues would have been of more service to him than his boasted power of working miracles ; for he could not speak a word of English, his preaching and conversation being conveyed to his hearers through the medium of an interpreter. He presumed, however, notwithstanding this deficiency, to perform wonders. He acted wisely in selecting an Englishman to interpret his sayings ; for, had he chosen a Welshman, it is probable that the task would have proved too much for him.

The Papists and the Pagans are continually boasting of their power to perform miracles. The Papists relate of St. Thomas, one of their saints, that the Cross addressed him as follows : “ Thou hast written well concerning me, O

\* *Spelm. Concil. Brit. p. 108, ex antiq. MS.*

† *Bed. Hist. Eccles. l. 2, c. 1.*

Thomas."\* The Pagans also say that the temple of the goddess of Fate spoke to the women who ministered there as follows: "Ye have done well."† The Papists affirm that St. Francis preached to birds, fishes, and wild beasts; and that his sermon effected such a mighty change in a greedy wolf, that he came to him, and solemnly swore that he would never afterwards injure either man or beast."‡ The Pagans also relate many similar stories. The Papists say that some man cut off his right arm, and hung it to a post, in the presence of a multitude of people; but, after he had devoutly bowed before the image of the Virgin Mary, his arm immediately leaped to its wonted place on his body, and was so skilfully and scientifically cemented that the joint was not visible.§ The Pagans also assert that a woman was greatly pained in her bowels by a large worm. She went to a wizard to obtain relief, but he was unfortunately from home: his servants, however, took her into the room where their master healed the sick, and cut off her head, in order to extract the worm with less difficulty. Before they had replaced and fastened the head in its proper position, the wizard returned, and chastised them for their temerity and presumption; but he had compassion on the woman, and made her immediately "every whit whole."|| It would be an easy matter to multiply such stories, which any one can perceive are entirely destitute of truth. But that false teachers have performed miracles, is a fact which cannot be controverted. Our Saviour says, "False Christs and false prophets shall arise, and shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect." *Mark* xiii. 23. If, therefore, Augustine the Monk endeavored to force the reception of his erroneous tenets, (such as the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, the invocation of saints, &c.) the Britons did well to withstand them, and to adhere to the admonition of our Lord, "But take heed: behold, I have foretold you all things." The remark of a member of our church is appropriate on this subject: "This I say to shew our opponents, the Papists, that they should not be angry at us for examining their

\* *Brev. Rom. in Fest. St. Thom.* 7. *Mart.*

† *Val. Max.* l. 1, c. 8.

‡ *Gest. St. Francisc.* N. 7 & 16.

§ *Baron. ad Ann.* 727, N. 5, 6, 7.

|| *Vid. Ælian. de Animal.* l. 9, c. 33.

miracles by the unerring rules of the scriptures ; for, if the former contain any doctrine which is not to be found in the latter, we reject them as lying fables, or the workings of Satan.\*

It is certain that the Britons of that age considered Augustine as a false teacher ; for their chronicles affirm that they would not salute an Englishman after Augustine had introduced so many corruptions into the Christian church, though, whilst they were Pagans, they would buy, sell, and deal with them.† It was not without scripture authority that the Britons acted thus ; for St. Paul says, " If a man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one do not eat." 1 Cor. v. 11. Those of the Britons who were orthodox in their belief would do nothing at all without scripture authority, as will be seen from one of their proverbs, " And the word of God above all."

Taliesin, one of the principle poets of that age, pronounces a curse upon those priests who did not carefully guard their flocks against the leaven of Augustine, and other Romish Priests, whom he calls the wolves of Rome.

Gwae a gymmerth fedydd,  
A chred a chrefydd,  
Oni's tystia ;  
Gwae hwy benaethau,  
A'u diriaid dafodau,  
Sy'n llawn traha.

Gwae offeiriad mud,  
Ni angreiffia gwud,  
Ac ni phregetha.  
Gwae ni cheidw ei gail,  
Ac ofe'n fugail,  
Ac ni's areilia.

Gwae ni cheidw ei ddefaid  
Rhag bleiddiau Rhufeiniaid,  
A'u fflon gwnppa ;  
Gwae ddigasog saint,  
Ni chadwo ei fraint,  
Ac ni addola.

\* *White's Way to Church*, 42, p. 303.

† *Vid. D. Ric. Davies, Ep. Menev. Præf. ad. N. T.*

Gwae eilun angau,  
 A wnel bechodau,  
     Oni's cyffesa ;  
 Gwae a yso fwyd,  
 Drwy segur fywyd,  
     Ac ni lafuria.

Gwae a gasglo olud,  
 Tra fo yn y byd,  
     O drais a thraha ;  
 Gwae, erbyn dydd-brawd,  
 Ni chospo ei gnawd,  
     Ac ni's gweddia.

Gwae a fo ben-gwlad,  
 Ac a fo ceidwad,  
     Ac a wnel draha ;  
 Gwae ni chred i'r Drindawd  
 Gwae ni rydd gardawd,  
     Ac ni thrugarha.

Gwae a ddygo dref-tad  
 Y weddw a'r ymddifad,  
     Oni's cphiawnha ;  
 Gwae a orchifygo'r gwan,  
 Ac a ddygo'i ran,  
     Oni's cyflawna.

Gwae a ddygo far  
 Yn ei galon at ei gar,  
     Ac a'i casha ;  
 Gwae berchen cyfoeth  
 A-welo lednoeth,  
     Oni thosturia.

Gwae hwy y gethern,  
 A wladychant uffern,  
     Ar ol byd yma ;  
 Man y mae erio,  
 Man y mae udo,  
     Byth heb esmwythdra.\*

The meeting of Augustine with the Clergy as before related is only a proof of his passionate and overbearing disposition : the nature of the wolf was hid under the clothing of the

\* We have inserted this in Welsh for the gratification of those who understand the language, in order that they may compare the style of writing in the time of Taliesin with that of the present day: Apostical translation will be found in the Addenda.—*Pub's.*

lamb. Hitherto nothing had been heard but "a still small voice:" the torrent and tempest were yet to come. At the first meeting it was agreed that the parties should adjourn to the division line of the counties of Worcester and Hereford, at a place which was afterwards called Augustine's Oak, (*Derwen Awstin*;) (for the assembly was held under a thick oak in the open field.) A very great number of the Britons attended, besides seven of the bishops of Wales, viz: the bishops of Worcester, Hereford,\* Llandaf, Llanbabarn-fawr, Bangor, St. Asaph, and Holyhead in Anglesea; besides whom, the able and intelligent students of the college at Carleon, (a place as noted then as Oxford is now;) and from North Wales many hundreds of educated teachers from the great monastery of Bangor-is-y-coed, in which were taught in that age all the different branches of literature which were then known: for such was the clamor raised by Augustine respecting the supreme authority and claims of the Pope, that the people crowded from all parts of the country to see the messenger he had sent from Rome. But before they arrived at the end of their journey, some of them met with an elderly man, who inquired where they were going.—"We are going," said they, "to meet Augustine, who was sent by one whom he calls the Pope of Rome to preach to the Saxons. He asks us to obey him, and also to receive the same ceremonies and articles of religion as are received and held by the church of Rome. Pray, what is your opinion on this subject? shall we obey him, or will we not?" The elder answered, "If God has sent him, obey him." "But how can we know whether he is sent by God or not?" said they. "By this shall ye know," said the elder: "consider what our Saviour says—'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart;' (*Matth. xi. 29*;) and if Augustine is a meek and humble man, and poor in spirit, hear him; if otherwise, have nothing to do with him. "But how shall we know," they rejoined, "whether he is proud or humble?" "Easily enough," said the elder: "proceed slowly, in order that Augustine may be at the place appointed before you, and sit in his chair: Now, he is only one, and I am told there are seven bishops on our side, besides many other respectable men: therefore, if Augustine will not rise from his

\* *These two bishopricks were at that time considered part of Wales.*

chair and salute you, you may then judge at once that he is a proud man: do not obey him." The counsel of this elder was considered by the whole of them as a kind warning from God, and they were unanimous in adopting it. After they had bid farewell to the elder, they proceeded on their journey, in the name of God; and, when they came into the presence of Augustine, he offered no salutation, nor did he move from his chair.

After looking at them for a considerable time, with an air of cold indifference, he condescended to address them as follows: "Dear brethren, although you hold many things contrary to our customs, yet we will bear with you in them, if you will at this time agree with us in three particulars: 1st. To observe the feast of Easter according to the discipline of the Church of Rome: 2d. To perform the ministry of baptism in the manner practised by the said Church: 3d. To assist us in preaching the Gospel to the Saxons. If you will join us in these ordinances, we will bear with you for a time in other matters now in dispute between us." The bishops of Wales replied, that they would neither coincide with the Church of Rome in these particulars, nor acknowledge him as their archbishop; "for," said they to each other, "if he was too proud to rise from his seat to salute us now, how much more would he despise us if we were to submit to his authority?"\* "Is that your answer?" said Augustine angrily, (and his blood boiled within him as he spoke,) "Is that your story? Perhaps you will repent this hereafter. If you do not think proper to join us in preaching the Gospel to the Saxons, rely upon it, the time will come, and that speedily, when you will receive death at their hands."

This was no idle threat, without intent; for, although Augustine possessed no more of the spirit of prophecy than did Simon Magus, he was instrumental in verifying his own predictions.† He instigated and encouraged ETHELBERT, one

\* *Si modo nobis assurgere noluit, quanto magis si ei subdi casperimus, jam nos pro nihilo contemnet. Bed. l. 2, c. 2.*

† Goldsmith, in relating this portion of English history, inclines rather to favor than to censure Augustine, of whom our author speaks in such harsh and uncompromising terms. He says: "Augustine, en-



of the Saxon kings, to collect men and arms to punish the Britons for their disobedience in refusing to receive him as their archbishop. Ethelbert prevailed upon another king, named **ELFRED**, to join him; and together they marched a very large army towards Chester, on the river Dee. When they were within two miles of that city, they were met by **BROCHFAEL YSGITHROG**, a grandson of Brychan Brycheiniog. He had but a few men under his command—not one tenth of the number of the enemy: he therefore determined to act with caution and prudence, and to seek terms of peace, lest his army should be sacrificed by rashness and temerity. “Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.” *Luke* xiv. 31, 32. So Brochfael, the governor of Chester, considering the weakness of his army, sent messengers to the two Saxon kings, desiring an amnesty; but their efforts were unavailing, and, instead of receiving that respect and attention to which they were entitled, they were slain at the request of the haughty monk who had excited the invasion.\* Brochfael then retreated towards the monastery of Bangor-is-y-Coed, in which there were more than two thousand monks—pious and holy men, who served the Lord “in the beauty of holiness.” They were not, like the monks of the Church of Rome at the present day, indolent carousers and lovers of

couraged by his favorable reception, and seeing a prospect of success, proceeded with redoubled zeal to preach the gospel. The king (Ethelbert) openly espoused the Christian religion, while his example wrought so successfully on his subjects, that numbers of them came voluntarily to be baptized, their missionary loudly declaring against any coercive means towards their conversion.”

As an additional evidence of the effects which resulted from the labors of Augustine, a celebrated historian observes: “It is a remarkable feature in the character and piety of the Anglo-Saxon princes, that continually the world was edified by the sight of one of them quitting his throne, and all the pomps and cares of royalty, and retiring to pass the evening of his days in the shade of a monastery, or in the holy city of the supreme pontiff.”—*Pur*’s.

\* *Vide Goodwin’s Catalogue, c. 4, p. 45.*

carnal pleasures ; but their lives were devoted to the acquisition of knowledge and the performance of works of holiness and charity. Some of them studied divinity, others medicine : some the languages, others the sciences ; nor were gardening, agriculture, or the mechanic arts without some professors amongst them. When Ethelbert and Elfred, with their immense army, were approaching, these monks, who had fasted for three days, went out of the monastery to meet Brochfael Ysgithrog : they prayed that he might be victorious, and encouraged him to be firm and fearless, notwithstanding his great inferiority to the enemy in point of numbers ; for they knew that, in the event of his defeat, they could expect no favor or mercy from Augustine. When one of the kings saw the multitude of monks thus assembled, he inquired who they were ; and when he was told that they were the priests of the Most High God, who had come there to pray for the success of their countrymen, he was very wroth, and, in the violence of his rage, rushed upon them, and murdered twelve hundred of them in cold blood, without the least resistance on their part. Whilst this act of cruelty and barbarity was being perpetrated, Augustine was a spectator of the scene, and consenting to the massacre. Not more than fifty of them escaped ! What the Papists were then, they still remain—a vindictive people.\* This occurred A.D. 601.

The Roman Catholics are offended at this heavy and, as they say, unfounded accusation against Augustine. They not only refuse to acknowledge that he was concerned in the massacre of the monks, but would fain have us to believe that he died previous to its occurrence.† It is certain, however, that this could not be the case ; for his signature is affixed to several instruments of writing which were executed several years afterwards.‡

About this time, great numbers of pious Britons emigrated to the island of Bardsey, in order to secure themselves from

\* *Vide Spelm. Concil. Britan. p. 110.*

† *Hanc Parenthesin in Bed. l. 2. c. 2, (quamvis ipso Augustino jam multo ante tempore ad caelestia regna sublato) Pontifici intexuerunt contra omnium MS. Saxonico-rum Librorum fidem. Spel. Concil. p. 110.*

‡ *Jewel's Defence, pt. 5, c. 1, p. 438.*

the heartless oppression of the Saxons. This they did in conformity with the counsel of our Saviour: "When they persecute you in one city, flee ye into another." *Matt. x. 23.* It is very probable that the monks who escaped from the massacre before described persuaded the rest, who amounted, it is said, to upwards of twenty thousand, to seek refuge in the island of Bardsey, where Daniel, bishop of Bangor, was interred.\*

But the hand of the Lord speedily avenged the martyrdom of His faithful servants. Wherever the bloody transaction at Bangor was related, the minds of the people were deeply excited and filled with indignation: Indeed, the feeling of abhorrence at the deed, and the desire for retaliation, became so general, that CADFAN, prince of North Wales, and MORGAN, prince of South Wales, tendered their services to the governor of Chester; each leading a host of chosen men, brave, valiant, and firmly resolved to defend the rights and privileges of their common country against all encroachments, from whatever quarter they might proceed. The two Saxon kings, highly elated, no doubt, with the success of their expedition, were on their return home, when the army of the Britons obstructed their progress, and favored them with a salutation which they were neither expecting nor desiring to receive. The Britons, when about to commence their attack, were reinforced by BLEDRIC, prince of Cornwall, who brought his troops to their assistance. By this time, the situation of the Saxons was by no means an enviable one: they were encompassed on every side, and had no possible chance of avoiding an engagement. Then their consciences began to smite them: the recollection of the innocent blood which they had shed, and with which their hands were still imbued, arose to their minds, and terror and dismay seized hold upon them. The resistance they made was brief and feeble. On the other hand, the Britons were cool and courageous: they were well persuaded of the justice of their cause, and, with the force and energy of an army of giants, they fell upon the enemy, and did mighty execution. The scenes which ensued are beyond description: they may be imagined, but cannot be related in words. Suffice it to say, that upwards of seventy thousand of the Saxon army fell on that day,

\* *Powel. Annot. ad Girald. l. 2, c. 6, p. 192.*

(amongst whom was Ethelbert,\* the king,) besides a great number who were wounded or taken prisoners.

Cadfan, prince of North Wales, was buried at Llan Cadwalladr, and the following words were inscribed on a door opposite to his grave: "Catamanus, rex sapientissimus, optimissimus omnium regum." That is, "Cadfan, the wisest and richest of all kings."† CADWALADR THE BLESSED, the founder of the church which bears his name, was his grandson.

But to return again to Augustine. There were three points (as you have already heard) on which he wished the bishops to acknowledge his authority, viz. To observe Easter according to the rules of the Church of Rome, to practise the same ceremonies in baptism, and to preach the Gospel to the Saxons. In the first place, the Church of Rome kept Easter from the first Sunday after the fourteenth day of the moon's age until the twenty-first day after the sun crossed the equinoctial line, in the spring or the sign of the Ram; and, if the fourteenth occurred on Sunday, then the ensuing Sunday was Easter. But the Britons, following the example of the Asiatic Churches, observed Easter only from the fourteenth to the twentieth; and, if the former happened on Sunday, that day was Easter. In this manner their Easter festival was sometimes kept a whole week before that of the Church of Rome; or, in other words, whilst the Britons were observing the solemn festival of Easter, the Romans were celebrating the return of Palm Sunday. It is true that authors are not agreed on this point; but it is thus that Caradoc, abbot of Llancafarn, relates the matter.

\* We cannot find a confirmation of this account of the death of Ethelbert, in any history to which we have referred; but in Hume's History of England we perceive something like a contradiction of it, or, at least, something which would lead us to doubt its correctness. It is the following: "Ethelbert died February 24, A.D. 617, and was buried at Canterbury." Now, the engagement in which our author says he was slain took place, according to his account, about sixteen years before; and it is very doubtful to us, whether, if he had fallen in battle at a distance from Kent, his body would have been singled out from amidst the thousands that were scattered on the field, and removed to Canterbury for interment.—*Pub's.*

† *Mona Antiq. Rest.* p. 156, 157.

The second proposition advanced by Augustine was that the rites of baptism should be administered according to the discipline of the Church of Rome : that is, that salt should be mixed with the water. This was an idle and superstitious ceremony, introduced into the Catholic Church at a time when our bishops could not possibly have any knowledge of it, as there had been no intercourse between Britain and Rome for nearly a century prior to the mission of Augustine to the English.\* This is testified by the chronicle before mentioned, in the following words : "The Christianity which Augustine introduced into England was mixed with many superfluous rites and unmeaning ceremonies, contrary to the nature of the kingdom of Christ ; such as crosses, images, the invocation of saints, a belief in the supremacy of the Church of Rome, and the mixture of salt with water in baptism."

The third demand which Augustine made was that the bishops and clergy of Wales should preach the Gospel to the Saxons. This they refused to do, because the Saxons, contrary to every principle of honor and honesty, had wrested their country from them by treachery and violence. They thought that repentance was not genuine, unless accompanied with a reparation of wrongs previously committed ;† and, as the Saxons had unjustly deprived them of their homes and their country, they rightly judged that the Pope ought to have directed Augustine to advise them to restore the property they had thus uncereimoniously stolen. Besides this, if they had consented to preach to the Saxons, they would have been compelled to receive all the corrupt doctrines of the Church of Rome ; for, although there were but two articles of faith upon which they directly disagreed, there were many points in relation to which they would have found it difficult to reconcile their opinions. This we may infer from the introduction

\* *Bishop Lloyd's Ch. Gov. of Britain*, p. 64.

† *Debuerat (Gregorius) medius filius admonisse Saxones, gentem perfidam, ut si sincere Christianissimum vellet admittere, Britanniae imperium (quod contra Sacramentum militiae, per Tyrannidem occupaverunt) justis dominis et possessoribus quam primum restituerant. Lel, v, 1, p. 71.*

to Augustine's address :\* " Dear brethren, although you hold *many* things contrary to our customs." Augustine was cunning ; he knew that it would be idle to expect a perfect concurrence in his views at once ; but, had they yielded to his first three demands, he would soon have found an opportunity to increase the number. The bishops, therefore, acted with great prudence in rejecting his propositions *in toto*. It may be thought that, in taking this bold and decisive course, they had been governed by the words of the Apostle—" Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware, lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." 2 *Pet.* iii. 17.

The Britons stood firm for at least a hundred and fifty years after this, contending manfully for the true faith, without being defiled with the corruptions of Popery. It is said that a monk, named *Eugubinus*, proclaimed that the Virgin Mary had appeared to him in a dream, and commanded him to cause her image to be put up in the churches, that the people should bow to it as to the image of Christ himself ; and when the Pope (poor man!) called a council to confirm the dream of this monk, the bishops of Wales refused to receive his authority, saying, " Let him keep his dream to himself." For this reason, an Englishman named *Ade'len*, bishop of Salisbury, wrote a book against the Britons, wherein he complained that their Priests married, and rejected the authority of the Pope and the rites of the church of Rome.†

Hitherto, we have seen, the Britons were steadfast in "contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints;" but Popery gained upon them gradually, and, admitting one ordinance after another, they were finally persuaded to embrace the whole doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. This consummation was effected in the year 763, when the Pope appointed *Elbod*, (in Latin *Elbodius*,) Patriarch over Wales, who, by his flattery and deception, perverted the people from the purity of the Gospel.‡ It is indisputable, however, that the Britons universally embraced the errors of Pope-

\* *In MULTIS nostrae consuetudini—contraria quertis.*  
*Bed.* l. 2, c. 2.

† *Vid. Lel. de Script. Brit.* p. 99.

‡ *H Lhwod's Brev. of Brit.* p. 67.

ry about the tenth century ; for we read that the good *Howel*, who began to reign in the year 940, took with him the archbishop of St. David's, the bishop of Bangor, the bishop of St. Asaph, and thirteen others—all men of good education, to Rome, to obtain the sanction and confirmation of the Pope to the Law which he and his counsellors had made for the government of Wales ;\* and we may naturally conclude that he and his counsellors would not have gone to Rome, if they had not at that time embraced the religion of the Roman Catholic Church, and submitted unequivocally to the authority of the Pope.

\* *Powel's Chron.* p. 54. *Ed. Lon.* 1584, and p. 51. *Ed. Lon.* 1697.

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CHAPTER IV. *Popery spreading over Wales—The Sermon of St. Anthony to the Fish—Various superstitious stories related by Giraldus, Arch-deacon of St. David's, who wrote A.D. 1188.*

In addition to the supremacy of the Pope, his usurped authority, purgatory, praying for the dead, Latin mass, the selling of pardons and indulgences, the withholding of the cup from the laity in the communion, the mixture of salt with the water in baptism, and many other unmeaning ceremonies and corrupt doctrines, adverse to the spirituality of the Gospel of Christ, and altogether inconsistent with the rule of faith, there are two points in the Roman Catholic creed which, more than all the rest, appear unreasonable and absurd, viz : praying to the saints, and a belief in Transubstantiation.

1st. Praying to the saints is altogether contrary to the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and consequently

contrary to all reason. "Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not." *Isa. xlii. 16.* From this passage it is doubtful whether the saints have any more knowledge of us than we have of them: but, whether they take cognizance of us or not, there is no evidence from the word of God that they can render us the least assistance. This corrupt practice is also contrary to reason; for, if we admit that a saint can hear a prayer directed to him in any part of Europe, is it possible that he can also listen to the petitions of one in Asia, another in Africa, and a third in America at the same time?—that he can hear them all from the four corners of the world, which are thousands of thousands of miles apart, at one and the same moment? No: infinity, omniscience and omnipresence are the incommunicable attributes of Deity. By this it will appear evident to every man that there can be but "one mediator between God and men—the man Christ Jesus." *1 Tim. ii. 5.*

2d. It is very doubtful if ever a more monstrous doctrine was inculcated by any sect of worshippers, than that of the Roman Catholic Church in relation to the bread and wine used at the Communion table, which is affirmed, by those who adhere to that faith, to be, when consecrated, the real body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. It must be evident to every reflecting man, that the nature of the bread is not changed; we can feel it, smell it, taste it, and, if it stand any length of time, it will become mouldy, will breed worms, and rot. Now, when men contrary to the testimony of their five senses, are persuaded to believe such absurdities as this, it is no wonder that they give themselves up to superstition, like the Papists, who believe that St. Anthony preached to the fowls and fishes, and consider all those as heretics who will not believe the following story.

When the heretics turned their backs upon St. Anthony, he went to the sea shore, and called the fish together, in the name of God, that they might hear the word of life. In compliance with the call, such a multitude of fish, great and small, collected near him, that they covered the face of the water—each taking rank according to its kind, as if they had been rational creatures. St. Anthony, who was highly pleased at this obedience of the fish, preached to them in the following words: "Although the infinite goodness of God, my



dearly beloved fish, is visible in all his works, his goodness appears to you in a more gracious form than to any other of his creatures ; for, although you are called creeping things, rendered deaf by the roaring of the waves, disturbed by tempests and the commotion of waters, and unendowed with the gift of speech, yet the greatness of God is manifested towards you in an especial manner. Was it without some secret intention, think ye, that you alone, of all creatures, were passed by and not made use of in the sacrifices, when the law was delivered to Moses ? Can you suppose, O fish, that Christ had no special design in feeding upon some of your tribe the first time he ate after the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb ? Can you think that it was by accident that Christ took money out of the mouth of a fish to pay tribute ? All these things have some hidden meaning in them, enjoining upon you the duty of setting forth the praise and glory of the great Creator.

It was from God, my dearly beloved fish, that ye received your existence, your life, your senses. Neither the cold of winter nor the heat of summer can cause any inconvenience to you. Whether the sky be clear or obscured, or whether the productions of the earth be scarce or abundant, it matters not to you. You are safe in floods, in earthquakes, in lightnings and in thunders. In what excellent order did God make a distinction between you and other creatures, at the time of the deluge ! When they perished, ye were safe and uninjured.

Such manifestations of divine goodness as these ought to fill you with gratitude to God, and induce you to praise his great and blessed name ; but, although ye cannot praise God with your tongues, and evince your gratitude in words, give some evidence that you are not unmindful of such favors : incline your heads, and shew your respect and gratitude in the best manner you can." When St. Anthony had finished his sermon, this innumerable swarm of fish bent down their heads, and swam about with liveliness and cheerfulness, in token of their approbation of the sermon.\*

We proceed now to give some account of the superstitious

\* *Addison's Travels into Italy*, page 26.

practices of the Papists in our own country. Giraldus, a man of erudition from Pembroke-shire, wrote in an unenlightened age, about the year 1200, when the whole world were given to lying and superstitious fables. I have collected the following stories out of his work alone, in order to shew how superstitious the Welsh people were in his day. The author was bishop of St. David's, but when he wrote he was only archdeacon, having his residence at Breconck.

Breconckshire had its name from BRYCHAN, a man from Ireland, son of Haelaf, king of Ireland, and Marchell, the daughter of Tudric, lord of the country now called Breconck. TYOFAEL, their daughter, was the wife of Gynghan, and Brochfael Ysgithrog (of whom we have spoken several times) was their son. Glamorganshire joins Breconckshire, and had its name from MORGAN M WYNFAWR (or kind Morgan) who was lord of the country: he fought many battles with the Saxons. It is said that he was so highly respected and so well beloved among his countrymen, that, when he was going to war, there was not a man capable of carrying arms who would remain at home. Hence the proverb, "*Mwynder Morganwg*" (the kindness of Glamorgan.) We now return to the superstitious stories of Giraldus, and wish every one to form his own opinion as to their veracity.

There was (said he) a man called ELIDUR, a priest, who testified as follows: When he was about twelve years old, he grew indifferent of learning, and, for fear of his master, retreated to the bank of a river, where he spent two days without food. Upon this, two very small men, scarcely a cubit high, appeared to him, and said, "If thou wilt come with us, thou shalt have enough of all kinds of diversion." "I will," said Elidur, and followed them through a hole until they had penetrated to the depths of the earth, where they found a delightful country, abounding in rivers, fields, and woods; but enveloped in darkness. The inhabitants were yellow headed, and very diminutive in size, yet hearty, riding horses of the size of hares. They would eat neither flesh nor fish, but lived on milk and roots: they would neither curse nor swear, and were adverse to deception in every form. After they had returned from the face of the earth upon which we live, (for they went and came when they pleased,) O! how our villainy wounded and pained their hearts. When Elidur

had lived with them for some time in the bowels of the earth, he was promoted to the favor and friendship of the king's son, with whom he amused himself by throwing a golden ball. Notwithstanding the excellence of the place, he with others ascended occasionally into this upper world, went secretly to his mother, and told her of the abundance of gold and other treasures they had in the lower world. The old lady listened to the story, and requested him to bring a ball of the gold the next time he visited her. The young stripling obeyed, and hastened with the ball in his hand towards his mother's house: having reached the threshold, two of the little men of the lower world overtook him, took the ball from him, and returned to their own place. He spent much time afterwards in seeking for the entrance to the country below, but his efforts were unavailing. This caused him for a while to be sorrowful and melancholy; but after some time he restrained himself, set his mind upon books, and at last was ordained a priest. I had this story (says my author) from David, the bishop of St. David's, who often conversed with Elidur himself on the subject.\*

About the year 1110, as Lord Radnor was going to Builth, on a hunting excursion, he lodged his dogs for a night in the church of Llan-avan-fawn, and the next morning they were all literally mad, and himself totally blind.†

About the same time, there was a remarkable bell called *Bangaw* in the church of Glasewm, near Radnor, which had formerly been in the possession of D-wi, the archbishop. A woman in the neighborhood obtained leave to carry the bell (it being a hand bell) to the Castle of Rhaiadr-Gwy, a small town in Radnorshire, where her husband was detained as a prisoner, in the hope that he would be liberated when the men in the Castle should hear the melodious sound of *bangaw*; but they made light of it, and thrust the woman out, took the bell from her, and hung it on a nail in the hall. Before morning, however, the town of Rhaiadr, and the Castle which had been lately built by Rhys ap Gruffydd ap Rhys ap Tewdwr, were flaming to the skies, and were burned to ashes, except

\* *Girard. Itiner. Cambr. L. 1. p. 129.*

† *Ibid. p. 66.*

the nail upon which the bell had been hung, which was not in the least affected by the fire.\*

The church of Llywel in Brecknockshire, and the village also, were burnt with fire about the same time, A. D. 1100, and every thing contained in them was destroyed, except a box which contained the consecrated bread, and which had not the smell of the fire upon it.†

In the church of St. Harmon, near Rhaiadr, was the crutch of St. Cy: i, plated with gold and adorned with pearls, above the loft, called *llofft y grog*, (because the image of the cross was generally painted on the front of the loft.) This crutch possessed the virtue of healing many diseases, such as the plague, the king's evil, and all manner of swelling in the arm-pits. The sick person would kneel down with reverence before the crutch, and offer a piece of money for his cleansing; and unless this was done no cure could be expected.‡

It happened, about the same time, that a young lad went clandestinely into the church of Dewi, in Brecknock, and climbed up to a dove's nest, intending to rob it of the young. When he stretched one of his hands to the nest, resting the other on a stone, it adhered so fast thereto that he could not in any way separate them, until he had spent three days and three nights there in fasting and prayer, when he obtained deliverance.§

The same author says that a harlot sat on the grave of a female saint, called Osanna, and when she attempted to rise she was as immovable as if she had been bound with a rope; many strong men took hold of her hands, and, although they caused her much pain, they could not move her. After some time, having confessed her wickedness, she was set at liberty.||

There was a chapel near Brecknock, (the walls of which are yet standing,) called the Chapel of ELNYFED, the name of one of Brychan's daughters. It adjoins *Lluoch Crug y Gorsedd*, where a wake, or the festival of a patron saint, was observed annually on the 1st of August. During the cele-

\* *Gira'd. p. 68.* † *Ibid.* ‡ *Si nihil attuleris, ibis Homere foras.* *Ibid. p. 67.* § *Ibid. p. 73.* || *Ibid. p. 74.*

bratton of this anniversary, after the reading of the Mass; some in the chapel and others in the chapel yard would faint; and in a short time leap upon their feet, in a wild and distracted manner, and shew by signs with their hands, and otherwise, whatever they had done wrong on previous festivals. Some made signs that they had been plaiting, others that they had been spinning, carding, or knitting; and, after they had thus made confession, they were restored to their right mind.\*

The following story has some appearance of truth. In the reign of Henry I, king of England, who ascended the throne A.D. 1100, GRUFFYDD AP RHYS AP TEWDWR, the prince of South Wales, was riding in company with two English gentlemen, who had deprived him of his possessions, near the lake Safathan (*Sawdd-Afen*.) The Englishmen, in a sneering manner, thus addressed him: "It is said that, if the legitimate heir to the throne of South Wales passes by the Safathan, and commands the birds to swim and sing, they will immediately obey him." "Well," replied the prince, "as you are now the masters here, do you give the command." The Englishmen, full of vanity and presumption, vociferated, "Sing, birds!" but the command was not obeyed, not a bird opening its mouth. Gruffydd ap Rhys then alighted from his horse, and prayed mightily unto the Lord, that he would be pleased to reveal the truth; and, when he arose from his knees, he said, "I command you, O birds, in the name of the Most High God, to sing." These words were no sooner uttered than all the birds, great and small, raised themselves from the surface of the water, and poured forth a flood of melody—apparently vieing with each other who could sing the most delightfully. The Englishmen, on their return to England, affirmed and swore to the truth of this story before the king. Giraldus says that in his time, this lake was encircled by the palaces of the nobility; and that thriving villages, with excellent orchards and gardens, were adjacent. It is melancholy, however, to add, that the character of the inhabitants cast a dark shade over the beauteous scene; for they lay in wait for and murdered each other without mercy.†

\* *Gir. p. 71.* † *Ibid. p. 82.*

About the same time, or perhaps a short time previous to the last mentioned occurrence, there was a man from Carleon, named MAELOR, who could give a correct reply to any question that was put to him. His skill in fortelling future events, and in unravelling secret and hidden mysteries, was acquired in the following manner. One night, he went to the woods in expectation of meeting a young lady: instead of her, an ugly, hairy spectre appeared to him. He was so terrified at the sight of this unwelcome substitute for his love, that he became insane, and continued in that condition for many years. At length, whilst engaged in praying to the saints in the church of St. David's, his reason returned, and he was restored to his right mind. From that time he had much acquaintance and intercourse with unclean spirits, for he saw them, conversed with them, knew them, and could call them by the r names. They always appeared to him aloft, with a horn full of brine suspended over their shoulders. Whenever he saw a treacherous man, he knew him to be such, for he could see the devil dancing and jumping across his lips. Although he could not read, yet, when he found a book that contained any thing incorrect, he could turn to the page, and point out the false passages; and his answer, when questioned as to the source from which he derived his knowledge, was, that the devil directed him.\*

When Giraldus and the archbishop of Canterbury were preaching near Milford-Haven, and endeavoring to persuade the people to undertake a crusade to rescue the city of Jerusalem from the hands of the Turks, a woman living in the neighborhood, who had been blind for three years, sent her son to obtain some portion, if only a thread, of the archbishop's apparel. Owing to the dense crowd which surrounded the prelate, the lad was unable to approach him; but, when the sermon was concluded, he took a sod from the place where the archbishop had been standing, and, when his mother applied it to her eyes, she immediately received her sight.†

In the island of Anglesea, there was a large stone called *Muon Morddwid*, (a thigh stone,) because it was in the shape of a man's thigh. Wherever this stone was removed, it al-

\* *Girald. p. 109.* † *Ibid. p. 142.*

ways returned to its old place. HUON, earl of Chester, in the reign of Henry I., hearing of its powerful properties, directed it to be fastened to another with an iron chain, and thrown into the sea. The order was obeyed, but the next morning it was found in the place from which it had been removed.\*

Such (with hundreds of others, which we have neither space nor inclination to insert) were the superstitious fables which were circulated and believed, during the prevalence of Popery in Wales; whilst, as a natural consequence, the gracious truths of the Gospel received but little or no attention. The ancient Britons were at one time highly commended for their adherence to the faith of the holy scriptures. One of their most common proverbs was "And the word of God above all." But, when they embraced the errors of Popery, the tares soon sprang up and choked the wheat—superstition overcame the purity and influence of the Gospel. During the prevalence of this moral darkness, scarcely a word could be heard of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: scarcely one prayer was addressed to God through the merits of His Son, whilst those directed to the saints, (more especially to the Virgin Mary, Gwenfrewi, and Santffraid,) were innumerable. It was at the Well of Gwenfrewi that the Pope's indulgences were sold to the pilgrims. Whoever was willing to buy a ticket was persuaded that, by the purchase, he was absolved from a certain sin; and, if he were lavish of his money, he could obtain pardon for any offences he might commit for years to come. The tradition runs thus: Gwenfrewi was the daughter of Temic ap Elwedd. One day, as she was sitting at home alone, (her father and mother being at church, listening to the preaching of St. Beuno, A.D. 630,) Caradoc, the lord of that district, came by, and attempted to ravish her. The chaste virgin eluded his grasp, and ran towards the church. Caradoc pursued and overtook her, and in the vehemence of his lust and passion cut off her head; but Beuno cemented it again to her body, and she was perfectly restored. In the place where the blood had fallen, a fountain gushed out, which afterwards received the name of Gwenfrewi's Well.† Now, there is no truth in this story:

\* *Gialrd.* p. 194.

† *Hist. o Fuchydd St. Beuno. MS.*

it is nothing more or less than a fabrication of the monks, invented for the sake of "filthy lucre." There was no more interest excited by the Well of Gwenfrewi than by any other, when Giraldus travelled through Wales, A.D. 1188; but in less than fifty years afterwards the monks had raised its reputation by circulating the above ridiculous tale, and in the year 1420 a market was opened there for the sale of the Pope's indulgences.\*

As it respects the miracles wrought by Saintffraid, (Winfred,) Jorwerth Vynglwyd extols her virtues in the following manner :

Y Lleian, hardd yw llun hon,  
 Lle urddwyd oll y Werlddon ;  
 Y dydd y ceisiodd dy dad  
 Wr da it' i'w roi attad,  
 Un o'th lygeid a neidiawdd  
 O'th ben, hyn a'th boenai'n hawdd ;  
 A thranoeth aeth yr wyneb  
 Oll yn iach, ni bu well neb.  
 Da nofaist hyd yn Nyfi ;  
 Dull Duw ar dy fantell di :  
 Ar lif y daethost i'r lan,  
 Sain ffrwd loyw, Sanffraid Gleian :  
 Ni cheisiaist lestri echwyn,  
 Dros for o'th oror i'th ddwyn,  
 Ond dy arch oedd dywarehen,  
 Urddo'r rhos o'r ddaear hen ;  
 A'th forwynion, iaith freiniol,  
 Yn llawn dawn, yn llwio'n d'ol.  
 Gwnaethost o'r brwyn, yn Ngwynedd,  
 Bysgod glan, basg gyda gwledd,  
 Byw'n iach deg, buan i'ch dwrn,  
 Byw'n esgud heb un asgwrn.  
 Llauer a wnaeth Duw erod,  
 Lle bych, och am allu bod ;  
 A'th wyl osodes Iesu  
 Noswyl Fair uwch na Sul fy.

\* *Powel. Annot. in Girald. p. 216.*



The following is by another bard. What a contrast in their views !

Ffei greiriau seintian, ffei serth—addoliad  
 I ddelwau mud anferth ;  
 Ffei o'r Pab a'i wael aberth,  
 Burdan gwan, a'i bardwn gwerth.

Ffydd Rhufain, flain, i foli—y Pab,  
 Ffydd mam pob drygioni ;  
 Ffydd waedlyd hefyd yw hi,  
 Ffydd ddol hen, ffei ddiawl o honi.\*

As the island of Britain was amongst the first to receive the Christian religion, so it was the first to purify itself from the errors and corruptions of Popery. This was effected in the reign of the pious EDWARD VI., who ascended the throne of England A.D. 1547. It is true that there had been a few individuals in Christendom, in previous ages, who perceived the extravagant and excessive superstitions of the Roman Church, and would willingly have rejected them ; but an overweening love to the world, and the dread of persecution, stifled the good resolutions of a majority of them, extinguished their zeal, and rendered them the pliant dupes of the Popish priesthood.

About the period just mentioned, God was pleased to visit this kingdom in a merciful and gracious manner, by restoring to it, in its original purity—in that state of uncorrupted excellence in which it was promulgated by the holy Apostles—the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ ; for those bishops and others, who by legal authority undertook to effect a reformation in the Christian Church, removed every practice that was corrupt and superstitious, and retained such only as were good and holy, and had been observed by the primitive followers of Christ previous to the introduction of Popery. In the year 1567, the New Testament was translated into the Welsh language by the Right Reverend RICHARD DAVIES, bishop of St. David's, and WILLIAM SALISBURY. Nineteen

\* See the ADDENDA for a translation of these lines.

years afterwards, the Old Testament was printed in Welsh, from the translation of that eminent scholar, DR. MORGAN, (vicar of Llanrhaiadr-yn-mochnant, and afterwards bishop of Llandaff,) revised by that learned Welshman, DR. DAVIES of Mablwyd. There is nothing lacking in the present day, but an Exposition in the Welsh language,\* if only on subjects in the New Testament which it is difficult to understand; lest false teachers, who are ignorant and unstable, wrest them, as they do other scriptures, to their own destruction. *2 Peter* iii. 16.

\* There was no Exposition in the Welsh language when this work was first printed. Since that time, the Commentaries of Gill, Scott, Doddridge, Guise, and Burkitt, have been translated and circulated freely through Wales, in addition to several others of Welsh origin.

*Translator*

CHAPTER V. *The Ministers of the Primitive Church*  
*—The offices of a Bishop, a Priest, and a Deacon—Their*  
*respectability in former ages.*

It is altogether impossible to obtain a true account of the order and discipline of the Primitive Church in Britain, because the greatest part of the writings of the ancient Britons were lost. The first destruction of books was made in the year 284, when the Christians in Britain suffered a cruel persecution as before mentioned. In the time of Augustine the monk, a great number of the books at Bangor-is-y-coed, which were more precious than fine gold, were burnt, and only such as could be taken out of the midst of the fire were saved. Of those that escaped uninjured, or were written afterwards, there are only a few extracts remaining, for, when Wales was made subject to the crown of England, its leading men were taken from time to time as prisoners to London; and carried their books with them for amusement whilst in confinement; but a wicked man named SCOLAN, unwilling that they should enjoy that small privilege, cast their books in heaps into the fire: wherefore the poet said,

'Twas villanous in Scolan, in his ire,  
 To cast the precious books into the fire.

There are doubtless many old manuscript books yet in existence in Wales, but they are few, and perhaps not one contains a full account of the discipline and order of the primitive Church. Now, the only way to supply this deficiency, is to give a history of the discipline of the Catholic Church, for this will shew that of the primitive Church in Britain, as well as in other countries. For, 1st. Many of the ancient fathers of the church commend the faith of the Britons, and testify that they were orthodox: 2d. Many of the bishops of Britain attended at several of the councils held in foreign countries:\* 3d. It is certain that the canons made in these councils were received in Britain as well as in the countries where they were made. Whatever we may assert hereafter

\* *Concil. Nicæn. A. D. 325. Con. Arelatense 1. A. D. 326. Concil. Sardic. A. D. 347. Concil. Ariminense. A. D. 369.*

to be the practice of the Catholic or universal Church in all Christendom, in the first ages, after the days of the Apostles, the same may be considered as the practice of the primitive Church in Britain before the introduction of Popery.

Here I shall commence with the clergy, as they are the leaders of the church, and the messengers of Christ. There is nothing more evident in history, than that there have been three kinds of church officers, in Christendom, since the days of the Apostles, viz: Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. From the east to the west, from the south to the north, in every kingdom and country where Christians resided, these three degrees of officers existed. St. IGNATIUS, a disciple of St. Peter, says: "He that continues in the communion of the Catholic church is clean, but whoever doth any thing wrong against the bishop, the elder, or the deacon, is unclean."\* This proves, beyond all reasonable doubt, that these three degrees of church officers existed from the time of the Apostles, or during the three first ages, when religion was in its purity—when it was neither gain nor honor in this world to be a bishop, and nothing was to be expected but persecution and a crown of martyrdom. And yet we cannot name one corner of the world, where the ministers stood on an equal ground without a bishop, to superintend and counsel a certain number of them. Indeed, BLOUNDEL, who exerted himself to search all the histories of Christendom, could not find any country where the ministers were equal, except Scotland; but our learned countryman from North Wales, the right reverend WILLIAM LLOYD, late bishop of Hereford, has exposed this old story in such a manner, that every man who is open to conviction can perceive its deceit and weakness.†

The office of a bishop was to preach the word, to ordain ministers, to see that they performed their duties faithfully, to excommunicate transgressors from the congregation of the faithful, and receive them again into the fellowship of the church, when they had done "works meet for repentance." In a word, the office of a bishop was to superintend and govern the church of God, to watch diligently that every thing

\* *Ignat. Epist. ad Trall.* p. 50.

† *Bp. Lloyd's Historical Account of Church Government.* p. 133, &c.

was conducted in decency and good order. Some say that this was the cause of the seat of a bishop being fixed in an elevated place in the Mother Church of the diocese—signifying thereby that it was their duty carefully to superintend the clergy and laity committed to his charge.\*

A pious bishop was formerly considered one of the greatest blessings in the world, and his advice was estimated in spiritual things as next only to the holy scriptures. St. Paul testifies of the Galatians, that he was so dear to them that they would have plucked out their own eyes, and given them to him, if it had been for his benefit; (*Gal.* iv. 15;) and St. Clement says of the Corinthians, that they walked in the laws of the Most High, submitting themselves to their rulers, and reverencing their ministers as it became them to do.† The ancient Christians would engage in no undertaking of importance, without first asking the advice of their bishop, for he was considered their spiritual father, authorized by Christ to perform the office of a shepherd over that part of the Catholic church which was within the limits of his diocese. Amongst the various kindnesses which our renowned countryman, Constantine the Great, shewed to the bishops, and to other respectable clergy, it is said that many of them were admitted into his family, and allowed to sit with him at his table; that he delighted more in associating with them than with the most wealthy lords within his empire; and that he was accompanied by some of them in the journeys he undertook; for he had found that God blessed him more and more daily, in answer to their prayers. “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”‡ *James* v. 16.

When BASIL, bishop of Cæsarea, was on his death bed, (says his biographer,) all the inhabitants met, and prayed as if they had been determined to detain his soul and keep it by force within his body. They were almost distracted when they thought of the loss they would have to sustain: there was not one who would not voluntarily have parted with a part of his own existence, if that would have lengthened his.§

\* *Dr. Cave's Prim. Chris.* pt. 1, c. 8, p. 222.

† *Epist. ad Corinth.* p. 2.

‡ *Eust. de Vit. Const.* l. 1, c. 35.

§ *Nazain. in Land. Bas. Orat.* 20, p. 371.

And when that pious father, CHRYSOSTOM, bishop of Constantinople, was banished by order of the empress EUDOCIA, it is said, all the people of the province were almost distracted, and with doleful lamentations exclaimed, "It would be better that the sun should refuse to shine, than that Chrysostom should cease to preach."\*

The bishops formerly delivered their opinions in temporal as well as spiritual matters : Any one who chose could remove his cause from a civil court to the bench of bishops, and their decision, be it what it might, was as peremptory as if given by the emperor himself or by the senate; and all civil officers were compelled to act in conformity therewith. Such was the respect and reverence shewn to these devoted servants of God, in the early ages of Christianity, in consideration of their honesty, their integrity, and the strict impartiality of their judgment.

The next officer of the Church, in point of rank, was an Elder or Priest, whose duty it was to preach to the particular congregation committed to his charge, to administer the rites of baptism, to consecrate the bread and wine in the communion, to visit the sick, to perform the marriage ceremony, to bury the dead, and to assist the bishop, not only in spiritual but also in temporal matters. Sometimes, indeed, the elders, acting under the authority of the bishops, were allowed to try and decide upon causes referred to them from the civil courts; but they could not interfere with temporal affairs unless with the consent and approbation of the bishops. Ignatius, the disciple of St. Peter, says, that whoever opposed or refused to submit to the bishops was a servant of the devil.†

If a priest wilfully and intentionally transgressed the law, the judiciary took no cognizance of the act, unless at the option of the bishops, who tried and passed judgment upon the offender; and, if any one treated with contempt a bishop or a priest who was pronounced innocent, he was excommunicated and his company avoided until he gave decided evidence of repentance, and made public acknowledgment of his of-

\* *Chrys. Epist.* 125, p. 763.

† *Ignat. Ep. ad Smyrn.* p. 7.

fence, asserted the innocence of the accused, and took the blame upon himself. If any one, in a fit of anger and resentment, for the gratification of personal feelings, raised his hand against a bishop or a priest, his life paid the forfeit.\* Such was the care formerly taken to preserve the characters of the ministers of Christ from the tongue of the slanderer, and their persons from the violence of the ungodly.

It was an excellent saying of Ignatius, "As Christ did nothing without the Father, so, beloved, do ye nothing except with the bishop or elder; but let all convene at the same place, that you may have one prayer, one petition, one mind, and one hope."†

Having explained some of the duties of the clergy, we will now notice some of those enjoined upon the laity. In doing this, we will make use of the words of another Father, named POLYCARP, who wrote early in the second century. "Let the priests be tender, meek, and merciful to all, restoring those who have gone astray, visiting the sick, the fatherless, and the widow, providing things that are honest in the sight of God and men, and avoiding envy and respect of persons."‡

The minister who sustained the lowest rank in the Church was the Deacon, whose duty, at first, was to serve tables—that is, to superintend the distribution of the alms which the Church administered to its poor members—to provide bread and wine for the communicants, and, with the consent of the bishop, to preach and baptize, &c. The Archdeacon was some respectable, gifted, prudent clergyman, whom the bishop appointed to oversee the deacons, lest they should presume to do that which was unlawful. It is from this part of his duty that an archdeacon is styled, in the writings of the ancient Fathers, "the eye of the bishop;" because, in the absence of the bishop, he had to superintend and watch over the concerns of the Church.

There were Deaconesses, also in the primitive Church and

\* *Vide Cave's Prim. Christ. c. 8, p. 258.*

† *Ignat. Ep. ad Magness. p. 33.*

‡ *Vide Dr. Cave's Lives of the Fathers, p. 127.*

that, too, in the time of the Apostles. "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord and Cephas." 1 Cor. ix. 5. MARY, PERSIS, and PHEBE were deaconesses. Their office consisted in ministering to sick women, changing their apparel before baptism, &c.; but they never presumed to preach. "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." 1 Cor. xiv. 34.

Ministers were set apart to these offices by the laying on of hands. This was practised by the Apostles, as we gather from the caution of St. Paul to Timothy, the first bishop of the Church at Ephesus: "Lay hands suddenly on no man." 1 Tim. v. 22. This ceremony was observed from age to age in the Church, and no one presumed to teach or preach without being thus ordained to the work. The truth is, there was not the same irregularity, disorder, presumption, and impudence, in the first ages of Christianity, as are now observable in the Church: many could not read, and it was not every one that could speak fluently who pretended to have the gift of the Spirit; nor would such men be permitted to speak in the primitive evangelical Church, unless they had been lawfully set apart by the laying on of the hands of the bishop.\*

The person wishing to be ordained was required to have a thorough knowledge of the scriptures, and to be well versed in the languages, in philosophy, history, and logic; or the art of reasoning with correctness. If evidence of his good conduct were given, and his examinations on spiritual subjects were satisfactory, he was set apart and ordained in the manner before described. One bishop was sufficient to ordain a priest or a deacon, but all the bishops in the province, unless prevented by sickness or some other unavoidable occurrence, were present at the consecration of one of their own order.† There is an instance, and only one, recorded in history, of one priest ordaining another; but, when the presumptuous act was brought to light, the offender was called before the bench, and dismissed from his office by an assembly of ministers.

\* *Vide Cypr. Epist.* 75, p. 236.

† *Cyp. Ep.* 68, p. 202.



We will now speak of the manner in which ministers were supported in the primitive Church : for "The Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel." 1 Cor. ix. 14. At first, they were supported by a collection made amongst the members, every one giving according to his ability. In the early ages of Christianity, when the zeal of its professors was fervent, this was sufficient : but, in addition, the parishioners, or those who attended in the same place, purchased a piece of land, and appropriated it to the use of the minister for the time being. Between these two sources of maintenance, the preachers of the Gospel had an abundance of the good things of this world, and were enabled to support a respectable standing in society ; although, it appears, those who were not favorably inclined towards them took every occasion to find fault. This caused Chrysostom to publish a treatise on the subject, in vindication of the clergy.\*

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#### CHAPTER VI.—*The Administration of the two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, in the Primitive Church.*

ALTHOUGH the word *sacrament* does not occur in the New Testament, it is nevertheless applied in a relative sense to signify the holy ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Amongst the Romans, its significations were various. It was applied to—1st. The pledge which a man gave when engaged in a lawsuit, by which he bound himself to appear and answer, otherwise his bond was forfeited : 2d. The

\* Chrysost. tom. 6, c. 896.

oath of fidelity which a soldier took to his commander : 3d. The different banners and uniforms by which each division of an army was known and distinguished from the rest.

Now, it is thought that the word *sacrament* is applicable to the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper in the threefold sense above referred to. 1st. God, when we grasp at the promises contained in His holy word, confirms and secures them to us, by outward visible signs and sacred pledges of His grace and favor : 2d. We take an oath, in our baptismal vow, to be faithful soldiers under Christ, our great captain and prince : 3d. We are distinguished by these marks from all those who do not profess to be the followers and disciples of our Lord and Master.\*

If mankind had been willing to decide their religious controversies by the rules and precepts of scripture, and in accordance with the practice of the primitive Church before errors and corruptions had affected its purity, the recent dispute respecting the subjects of baptism would have been speedily terminated. No one who understands the scriptures, and is acquainted with the forms and discipline of the primitive Church, can doubt the right of infants to baptism, without being guilty of sacrilege, and of opposing the ordinances of God himself : for the covenant which God made with Abraham was an everlasting covenant—not confined to the natural seed of that illustrious patriarch, but sufficiently ample to embrace also the whole gentile world, our Lord having broken down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles. *Eph. ii. 14.* The Apostle says : “ Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.” *Gal. iii. 7.* Wherefore, the infants of the faithful amongst the Gentiles are in the covenant, and are, by faith, the children of Abraham. Have they not, then, a title or a right to the seal of that covenant ? Ought not infants to be baptized under the Gospel dispensation, as they were circumcised under the law of Moses ? for baptism follows circumcision, as is satisfactorily and abundantly proved in the writings of many of the ancient Fathers of the Church.

\* *Estrange Alliance of Divine Offices*, c. 8, p. 230.

But some one may say that no mention is made of infant baptism in the New Testament. If we admit this, we are still persuaded that no doubt existed at that time as to the right of infants to be admitted into the church, not only by circumcision, but also by baptism; for, under the law of Moses, the Gentiles and their infants were admitted as well by the latter as the former.\* But infant baptism is plainly and unequivocally maintained in the New Testament; for St. Paul says that "The unthinking husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now they are holy." 1 Cor. vii. 14. The meaning of this is, that a man, who is an unbeliever, may be brought to a knowledge of the truth by the pious persuasion and exhortation of his wife; and a woman, who has been "living without God and without hope in the world," may be converted from the error of her way by the Christian example and fervent prayers of her husband; but the Apostle says, if either of them is a believer, the children are holy, or have a right to baptism, or are Christians—for that is the correct signification of the word *holy*. It is well known, too, that in those times none were called Christians until they had received the rites of baptism. Here, then, is positive evidence that infant baptism is inculcated in the New Testament.†

In accordance with this, the works of the ancient Fathers shew, as plainly as writing can shew, that infant baptism was practised in the Catholic Church from the days of the Apostles. It would be an endless task to copy the testimony of all those who, in successive ages, have written upon the subject. St. Austin, bishop of Hippo, in Africa, thus closes his remarks in relation thereto: "Quod universa tenet Ecclesia, nec conciliis institutum, sed SEMPER retentum, non nisi Apostolica Autoritate certissime creditum:"‡ That is, "This is held by the Catholic Church throughout Christendom. It was never ordained in any council, but has ever been observed from age to age. The practice, therefore, must have proceeded from the Apostles." Austin here shews that infant baptism was maintained in the universal Church

\* *Vide Hammond in Matt. iii. 1.*

† *Vide Hammond in Loc.*

‡ *Aug. de Bapt. l. 4, c. 24.*

of Christ—that it was never adopted in any council—that its legality had never been doubted—that there had been no dispute or controversy respecting it, and that it had been practised continually from the days of the Apostles until his time, being more than four hundred years. He says further, that the ordinance stands upon such a firm foundation, that nothing but obstinacy or gross ignorance can reject or ridicule it.

In the days of Cyprian, it is true, there was a difference of opinion, not whether infants should be baptized, for this was indisputable, but with regard to the time of administering the rites. There was a bishop of the name of FIDUS, who doubted whether it was proper to baptise infants before the eighth day. Now, lest any dispute or schism should take place in the church, St. CYPRIAN, archbishop of Caer in Africa, called a council, at which sixty-six bishops met to consult in relation to this matter; and it was their unanimous opinion that infants ought not to be kept until the eighth day without baptism. It may not be improper in this place to add an extract of the letter which they sent to Fidus on the subject :

“As to the opinion you expressed, as to the impropriety of baptizing infants on the second or third day after their birth, and that as to your conviction that thy should be kept till the eighth day, according to the law of Moses, our assembly have come to the reverse conclusion. There was not one of us who could agree with you on this point: our opinions were unanimous. We all judged that it is not necessary to keep infants so long from the favor and goodness of God, for as much as our Lord said that he did not come to destroy the souls of men, but to save them. So it devolves upon us to be careful that not a soul should be lost by our negligence. What defect can there be in any thing which has been formed perfect by the power of God in the womb? The growth of the body, it is true, makes a difference as it respects men, but not as it respects God. The Holy Ghost is given without distinction to all, not according to their stature, but according to the will of our Heavenly Father; for, as God is not a respecter of persons, neither is he a respecter of age. Wherefore, dear brother, it is our candid and universal belief, that no one who is a proper subject of baptism ought to be prevented from partaking of its blessings. But, above all, let us be careful of newly born infants, who are beseeching us, as it were by

their weeping and crying, to have pity and compassion upon them.”\*

This letter was written in the year 254, and contained the signatures of sixty-six bishops. The reason that there are no spiritual proofs advanced to uphold infant baptism, is, that there was not at this time, nor had there been since the days of the Apostles, any dispute on the subject. Fidus only hesitated concerning the time and objects of baptism, and it is to this alone that the council directs its answer.

That godfathers and godmothers, as sureties to the church of Christ, answered for, and became bound in the name of the infants, will appear from the testimony of Tertullian, who wrote about the year 180. “Why should godfathers” said he, “expose themselves to danger, when they may die before they fulfil the engagements they make, or when those for whom they promise may be very wicked, in despite of all that may be done to or for them?”†

It is true, he writes against godfathers, and that for two reasons, which appear plainly from his words; yet it is evident that godfathers answered for infants at that time, (within one hundred years after the time of the Apostles,) when every thing was in its proper order. The truth is, this eminent Father, in his last days, deviated slightly from the Apostolic faith,‡ and he therefore exalts his own particular opinion in preference to the discipline of the church. Respecting infant baptism he also says: “Why doth this innocent age hasten to receive the remission of sins? Let them come to be baptized when they come to age.”§

This error probably originated in the opinion he held respecting the consequences of original sin; for he calls INFANTS *the innocent age*, conveying thereby the idea that they had no need of baptism. This is a satisfactory proof that the duties of godfathers and godmothers were practised in the prim.

\* *Cyprian Epis.* 59. p. 164.

† *Tertull. de Bapt.* p. 603.

‡ *Ad Heresim Montanorum.*

§ *Tertull. ibid. Lib. 2. Cap. 18.*

itive church, from the days of the apostles to the time of Tertullian.

When the godfathers met, the priest was accustomed to admonish them on the responsibility they were assuming—to urge on them the necessity of fully understanding the promise they were about making in the name of the child, to instruct it in all the principles of the Christian religion, and to use their utmost endeavors in order that the child should lead a religious life in the fear of God. Then, after praying for the blessing of the Most High upon the ordinance, the minister took the child in his arms, and, when informed of his name by the godfather, he dipt him three times in the water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. If the child was weak or sickly, water was sprinkled three times upon its forehead in the name of the Trinity. The priest then acknowledged it as a member of the church, and made the sign of the cross on its forehead, thereby signifying that the child was now a soldier of Jesus Christ, and had received his mark. The ceremony of making the sign of the cross is as old as the commencement of Christianity. Even Tertullian himself commends the ceremony, although his opinions on other points are not very satisfactory.\* Hence the proverb, “A forehead having received the sign of the cross”—that is, a Christian having received baptism.† It is true that the greatest part of the ancient Christians immersed the whole body in or under the water; yet they did not consider one dipping sufficient to ensure complete baptism, as will appear from the words of SOZOMEN, who wrote a history of the church about the year 440. He says, in effect, that he who had been immersed only once, was, in his opinion, in as much danger as he who had never been baptized.‡ But to be sprinkled three times was considered as good as three immersions, for that holy martyr St. CYPRION, says plainly, That he could not understand why the holy gift was withheld any more by sprinkling than by dipping, provided there was faith to receive it; for the washing of sins in baptism (said he) is different from the washing of the pollutions of our bodies in a

\* *Caro signatur ut et anima muniatur. Tertull. de Resurrect. p. 31.*

† *Frons cum signo. Cypr. de Laps. p. 301.*

‡ *Soz. Hist. Eccles. L. 1. C 26. p. 150. Ed. Lov. 1569.*

river. Let no one wonder that we baptise those who are weakly by sprinkling water upon them, inasmuch as the Holy Ghost saith, "Then will I sprinkle clean water and ye shall be clean." *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25; and in *Num.* viii. 7, "And thus shalt thou do to them to cleanse them—sprinkle water of purifying."—From this it is evident, said he, that sprinkling is equal to immersing.\*

If an infant or an adult had been once baptized either by sprinkling or dipping, the same was not re-baptized; for all the ancient Christians adhered steadfastly to the Apostolic rule: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," *Eph.* iv. 5. There is a remarkable account respecting St. Athanasius, whilst a boy. It is as follows: "ALEXANDER, the bishop of Alexandria, in Egypt, was accustomed to keep the holiday of St. Peter, according to the practice of the Church. In the afternoon of one of these anniversaries, he walked into the fields, where he saw a number of young lads amusing themselves, and, amongst the rest was a sprightly young man leading the others to a river, and baptizing them. Alexander, upon his return, related the circumstance to the clergy of the city, who were naturally much surprised at the novelty of the proceeding. When they had reflected on the matter, they sent for the boys that they might have a confirmation of the whole story from themselves. In answer to there inquiries, they learned that Athanasius had undertaken to imitate the office of a priest, and had baptized his companions; and it was the opinion of the bishop and his elders that the baptism was valid, and a repetition of the baptismal rites was not necessary, inasmuch as they had been performed in due order in the name of the Trinity.†

That there were instances of persons who re-baptized in ancient times, cannot be denied; but these were so many heretics, who had left the way of life and the correct discipline of the Catholic Church. The leader of this sect was called EUNOMIUS, who invented a form of baptism different from that laid down by Christ; for he contended that none ought to be baptized in the name of the Trinity, and that the form should

\* *Cypr. Ep.* 76. p. 249.

† *Sozom. Hist. Eccles. Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 17.

be, "I baptize thee into the death of Christ"\* As many disciples as this heretic could entice by his vain reasoning (for he was very eloquent,) underwent a second baptism, notwithstanding they had been previously baptized in the name of the Trinity. It was he who changed the ancient practice of dipping thrice, affirming that once was sufficient.

In the first ages, when a person believed in Christ and embraced His religion, he was baptized forthwith, as in the case of the eunuch whom Philip baptized, related in *Acts* viii., or the jailor and his family who were baptized by Paul and Silas, as mentioned in *Acts* xvi. JUSTIN the Martyr, a writer of the second century, says: "Whosoever has been instructed in the principles of the Christian faith, and is willing to live and act in conformity with the injunctions of the Gospel, is exhorted to fast and pray, that he may obtain forgiveness for his former unbelief: we will fast and pray with him, lead him to a place where there is water, and, as we are regenerated, so also shall he be."† About the third age, or probably a little earlier, it was appointed that baptism should be administered semi-annually at Easter and Whitsuntide; but, in cases where death was expected, the person was baptized immediately, and in his bed, if necessary. On Whitsunday, those who had been newly baptized arrayed themselves in white apparel. This was the origin of the term WHITESUNDAY, and is alluded to by the poet in the following lines:‡

O LORD of heaven and earth, whose eye can scan  
The inmost thoughts and deep desires of man,  
Look down upon this amiable band,  
Who in thy presence now devoutly stand.  
Joined to the Church by Baptism's holy rite,  
And seeing safety only in Thy light,  
From worse than Egypt's bondage forth they come,  
And travel to the Holy Land, their home.

\* *Non in Trinitatem, sed in Christi mortem baptizandos esse asserens. Sozom. ibid. Lib. 7. Cap. 26.*

† *Just. Mart. Apol. 2. p. 97.*

‡ *Luctant. Poem. de Resurrect. p. 765.*



In robes of white without a blemish, drest,  
 They hasten to the land of heavenly rest,  
 Where milk and honey shall forever flow,  
 And beauteous flowers of deathless fragrance grow—  
 Where no dark clouds the firmament obscure,  
 Where vows are faithful, promises are sure—  
 Where pain and sickness, and the fear of death,  
 No more shall harm them, or obstruct their faith—  
 Where saints and angels shall together meet,  
 And offer ceaseless worship at thy feet.

Their garments, whiter than the Alpine snows,  
 And fairer than the fairest virgin rose,  
 Are emblems of that holy, fearless calm,  
 And peace of mind, which nothing can disarm ;  
 And well may he,\* their minister and friend,  
 Rejoice in hope *that* peace will never end.

It might reasonably be supposed by the above, from a superficial view, that Justin Martyr wished to convey the idea, that infants were not baptized in his time ; but such was not the case : 1st. He alludes to pagans who embraced Christianity : 2d. In another part of his writings, he speaks of infant baptism as a practice that was customary in all countries. See *Apol.* 2, p. 27.

We ought, therefore, not to pervert such expressions as these so as to make them a vindication of obstinacy and error. But the unlearned and unstable wrest the scriptures to their own destruction. 2 *Pet.* iii. 16. It is no wonder, then, that they do the same with the writings of men.

We will now advert briefly to the other sacrament—the Lord's Supper, and adopt the following plan : We will speak of, 1st. The time it was received : 2dly. Who were considered proper subjects to receive it : 3dly. The manner in which it was received.

I. The usual time was immediately after the service in the church on the Lord's day ; for Justin the Martyr says that

\* *The Pastor of the church.*

the time they used to receive the communion was after they had read, sung praises, preached, and prayed.\* As to the hour, it is evident that Christ ordained this sacrament to be held in remembrance of his death, in the afternoon or evening, if not at twilight; but we have no evidence that the apostles observed the same rule. It is nevertheless certain that, in the first ages, it was customary to commune in the night; but this practice was not universal. It is thought that they were compelled to this by persecution: for the lives of the worshippers were endangered if they met in the day time. The ancient Fathers who wrote about two hundred years after Christ assure us, that they received the communion in the morning or forenoon;† and the same practice has been continued ever since, except in some parts of Egypt, where they used to commune in the evening, having first eaten and drank to satiety. It is probable that the love feasts mentioned in the 12th chapter of Jude, were practised in these places until the time mentioned. In these love feasts the communicants, according to their ability, brought meat and drink to the place in abundance, and all, without distinction, poor as well as rich, feasted before they received the sacrament. This is what Paul complains of in 1 Cor. xi. 21, when he says, "One is hungry and the other drunken;" and because so many disorders were connected with these feasts, their repetition was forbidden at a council held at Laodicea, A. D. 365.

But to return: in cities and towns, in the first ages, when the people's hearts were burning within them with zeal and thanksgiving to the Lord, it is not improbable that there was communion every day, in some church or other. Indeed, in some places, the priests at least (and others who enjoyed the opportunity) received the communion every day throughout the year; for St. Cyprian says, "We receive the communion every day, as the food that feeds us to salvation."‡ This commendable practice continued (particularly in some places) for more than four hundred years amongst the clergy, as may be inferred from the writings of St. Austin, bishop of Hippo, who died A. D. 552. But in succeeding

\* *Cypr. ad Cæcil. Ep.* 63. p. 104.

† *Socrat. Hist. Eccles. l. 5 c. 22.* p. 887.

‡ *Cypr. de Orat. Dom.* p. 102.

ages, when their love and zeal waxed cold, (as did those of the Israelites when they loathed the manna) they extended the time to a week, to two weeks, and to a month, and finally to three times in a year, viz. at the Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide festivals.

Our second inquiry is, Who were considered worthy to receive the communion? Not every one who had the name of a Christian was admitted to the Lord's table, in the primitive Church; for, says one of the old Fathers, "To eat of this bread and to drink of this cup does not belong to all.\* By this it appears that notorious sinners would not be admitted to the Lord's table in former times any more than they are now in the church of England: for "Where there is public misconduct, or where a person wrongs his neighbor by word or deed, the curate upon receiving information will send for him, admonish him, and warn him not to approach until he publicly professes true repentance, and reforms from his former wicked course."† In the primitive church none were received at the Lord's table except—1st. Such as had been baptized in the name of the Trinity: 2d. Such as held to all the principles of the Christian religion: 3d. Such as were blameless in their conduct: 4th. Such as loved their fellow Christians: 5th. Such as belonged to the communion of the Church: 6th. Such as had been confirmed by the bishop. No one would be considered a perfect Christian in ancient times, until he was confirmed by the laying on of the hands of the bishop; as the apostles did when they sent Peter and John to confirm the Samaritans, after they had been baptized by Philip. Philip had no authority to do this, because he was only a deacon. *Acts viii.*

If any of the faithful were sick, or were prevented by weakness or accident from attending at church, a deacon was sent to their dwelling with a small piece of the consecrated bread dipped in the wine. Justin Martyr confirms this in the following words: "The deacons will distribute the bread and wine to those who are present, and carry them home to those who are absent." But all who were absent were not entitled to the privilege; for, at a council held in the year 314 in

\* *Orig. in Job. vol. 2. p. 315.*

† *The Rubric before the communion.*

France, it was decreed "That an apostate, or one who had once denied the faith, could not be restored to the communion of the Church on a bed of sickness, until he manifested some signs of a reformation in his conduct." At the same assembly it was also ordained, that he who bore false witness against his neighbor should never be admitted to the communion table.

Thirdly : We are to inquire into the manner in which the communion was received. In the first place, the deacon (as they formerly had an old ceremony) brought a bowl of water to the bishop and elders, who stood on each side of the communion table, to wash their hands, signifying that purity and holiness of heart (which is requisite in those who draw near to God, as the Psalmist says : "I will wash my hands in innocency ; so will I compass thine altar, O Lord.")\* *Psalm xxvi. 6.* Then the deacon exclaimed aloud, "Kiss one another." This practice of kissing one another at the Lord's table began at an early period, even in the days of the apostles. *Rom. xvi. 16.* And this they did to testify their brotherly love, as our Saviour shows : "Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way ; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. *Matt. v. 23, 24.*

Then would follow the prayer commonly used for the peace and general union of the church ; for peace and tranquility in the kingdom ; for the prosperity of the age ; for suitable weather and fruitful seasons ; for all men in all situations—emperors, kings, and all in authority ; for the army and navy ; for believers and unbelievers ; for friends and fellow travelers ; for the sick and sorrowful : in a word, for all who stood in need of assistance. These general prayers were an established part of the worship of God, and a ready form which is yet to be found in the works of the ancient Fathers of the Church ; but our limits will not allow us to copy the whole of it.†

Then would follow the salutation between the minister and

\* *V. Cave's Prim. Christian. P. 1. c. 11. p. 346.*

† *Apost. Const. l. 8. c. 18, p. 1011.*

the congregation. The priest would say, "The Lord be with you." The people would answer, "And with thy spirit." The priest would again say, "Lift up your hearts." The people would answer, "We do lift them up unto God." The priest would say the third time, "We will thank the Lord God." The congregation would answer, "It is proper so to do."\* Then, when the priest had consecrated the bread and wine, it was distributed to the communicants, who received it in the same posture as when they prayed, either standing or kneeling; but it was never heard that any of the ancient Christians received it sitting. They had more reverence for the Lord than to commemorate his death in such an irreverent posture; but the Pope of Rome, and the Arians also, who deny the Divinity of Christ,† have the presumption to sit.

Perhaps some will object, that our Saviour sat when he ordained the sacrament. This is a great mistake. Our Saviour, in eating the Passover, followed the practice of the Jews, who reclined or partly laid on couches, three on the same couch, leaning upon each other, as John leaned on the bosom of Jesus. *John* xiii. 23. But inasmuch as our Saviour gave no positive direction on the subject, the primitive Christians judged correctly that the humblest posture would be the most acceptable; and history testifies plainly that they always received the communion in the same bodily posture as they prayed.

\* *Dr. Cave's Prim. Christ. pt. 1. c. 11. p. 347.*

† *Heyl. Hist. Presbyt. l. 6. p. 115.*

CHAPTER VII. *The public worship of God in the Churches, and the manner of performing family worship in the primitive Church.*

It would not be improper, in the first place, to speak of the diligence of the primitive Christians, in their attendance at public worship. "On the day called Sunday, (said Justin Martyr,) all of us in the country and town meet in the same place." Neither the distance, the inclemency of the weather, nor any other vain excuse, would prevent them from attending the worship of God. To read, pray, and sing praises, at home, was not considered sufficient whilst the public worship of God was neglected; and when they were prevented by sickness, or any accident, it caused them nearly as much grief and sorrow of heart as if they had been banished from their country. If any neglected, he was seriously chastised, except he had some better excuse than that his clothes were old, or his horse weak. In an assembly held in Spain, A. D. 305, it was decreed that any person being absent from church for three successive Sabbaths should be withheld for some time from the communion.\*

The Church of Christ continually observed the Lord's day reverently and religiously. "Let every one (said Ignatius) that loves Jesus Christ keep the Lord's day holy, which is like the king of other days. It was on this day that our Saviour arose from the dead—that our salvation was perfected—that death was deprived of his sting, and swallowed up in victory." It was always called the Lord's day by the ancient Fathers of the Church, and sometimes Sunday, in order to conform to common language. The practice of calling it the Sabbath is of recent origin. Wherever we meet with the word Sabbath in the New Testament, we are to understand it to refer to the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday.

The first thing they did when they met was to unite in prayer, and every prayer was ended with the Lord's prayer. This practice was continued from age to age, as will appear by the words of St. Cyprian, who thus alludes to it: "Christ has given us a form of prayer: he hath warned us and taught

\* *Concil. Illiber. Can. 21.*

us how to pray. He that gave us existence gave us also a prayer, and may we not expect that our prayers will be more successful with our Heavenly Father when we use the words which His Son taught us? For what prayer can be more spiritual than the one we received from Jesus Christ, who also gave us His Holy Spirit? And what prayer can be so effectual and prevalent with God as the prayer of His Son—the truth which He taught with His own sacred lips? Let us therefore, beloved brethren, pray as we have been taught by our Redeemer. God will own and acknowledge the words of His Son; and, inasmuch as we have an advocate with the Father to intercede for us, let us use the words of our Mediator, who assures us, that whatsoever we ask in His name, it will be granted to us. How much more effectual will our prayers be, if we pray in His own words!''\*

This is sufficient to prove that the ancient Christians, immediately after the days of the Apostles, made use of the Lord's prayer. It is evident, also, that their other public prayers in the worship of God were established forms, though different names were applied to them in the works of the Fathers. Ignatius, the disciple of St. Peter and bishop of Antioch, calls them *the same Continual Prayer*;† Justin the Martyr, *the Common Prayer*;‡ St. Cyprian, *the Public Prayers*. And nothing can be more certain than that they meant an established written form. The assembly before mentioned, held at Laodicea,§ A.D. 365, ordained that the same prayers should be used in the morning and evening services. Inasmuch, therefore, as the Jewish church in its regular service used a form of prayer, and as Jesus Christ himself attended public worship under that dispensation, and never said a word against a form of prayer, but rather always appeared to be pleased with it; the primitive Christians rightly judged that a set form in the public worship of God was acceptable: otherwise they would presume to be wiser than Christ himself; and therefore a long unpremeditated prayer in a con-

\* *Cypri. de Orat. Dom.* 1, 2. p. 309.

† *Ignat. Ep. ad Magnes.* p. 33.

‡ *Apol.* 2.

§ *Can.* 7.

gregation is nothing else than presumption and human invention.\*

After prayer, a portion of the Old and New Testament was read;† but how much at a time is uncertain, for the Pagans would often rush upon them, and disturb them, and cause them to conclude sooner than they otherwise would have done. But when God was pleased to convert persons in authority to Christianity, then a certain portion, viz. one lesson in the Old and another in the New,‡ was appointed to be read at each meeting of the congregation. Not only the holy scriptures, but homilies composed by pious men, were also frequently read in public: such, for instance, as the Epistle written by St. Clement to the Corinthians, and many other excellent books which were thought to be of general benefit to the hearers.

Then, singing praises to God was an exercise which was conscientiously attended to by the primitive Christians, in their family as well as their public worship, from the days of the Apostles. The Psalms that were sung were either a portion of the Psalms of David, or some other parts of scripture, composed in metre by pious men; and this liberty was granted until the assembly of Laodicea, which was held A.D. 365, when it was ordained that the composition of any private individual should not be sung publicly in the churches.

Then the sermon followed. Literary characters think that the sermon was nothing more than an exposition of some portion of the word of God, which had already been read,

\* This is one of the prejudiced opinions of the author, in which we cannot possibly coincide. It is true, the established form of prayers in the Church of England is unequalled for its sublimity and solemnity—for its fervor and devotion; but we cannot condemn the extemporary mode of praying adopted in other churches, as “presumptuous,” or as a mere “human invention.” We know not what opinions may have been current at the time this book was first published; but the expression of such a sentiment as the above, in the present day, (notwithstanding all the prejudice and bigotry that are so common,) would be discountenanced by the universal voice of religious professors.—  
PUB'S.

† *Just. Mart. Apol.* 2. p. 98.

‡ *Con. Apost. l.* 2 c. 57. p. 875.



with weighty exhortations to the performance of the duties therein enjoined, and to the avoiding of the sins forbidden in such portions of the word of God ; and an illustration of some of the doctrines contained in those portions of the scripture which had been read.

When the sermon was finished, the deacon admonished all to pray. This prayer was called the *secret prayer of the congregation*, for every one would retire, and pray alone in secret, without the aid of words ; and finally, when all the congregation had thus prayed, the priest offered up his petition alone, and epitomized the whole of the supplications made before into one prayer. This is the origin of the word *Collect*, because the minister collected a compendium of all the secret prayers of the congregation into one.\*

It is easy to prove that the ancient Christians did not pray either to saints or to angels. I will here give the sentiments of the church of Smyrna on the subject : " We worship Christ as the Son of God. We respect the memory of the martyrs, as disciples and followers of our Lord, and as those who have shown an invincible love to him ; and in this we would wish to imitate them."† Irenæus, who wrote A.D. 180, says : " The Church of God thinks it strange to pray to angels, or to use charms or other curiosities ; but in a pure, incorruptible, inoffensive way she directs her supplications to the great Creator, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."‡ These expressions fully agree with the scriptures, and are so powerful an argument against Popery, that it is impossible to answer them. " For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men—the man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. ii. 5.

It is said that the Antideluvians turned their faces toward the East when they prayed ; and this usage continued from age to age until, by degrees, they became corrupted and worshipped the sun, which arose in the East. They thus looked to the East until the time of Solomon, when the Ark was

\* *Vid Orig. Brit. c. 4, p. 224.*

† *Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 4. c. 15.*

‡ *Gren. l. 2. c. 57.*

placed on the west side of the temple ; and from that time the Jews looked towards the West when they prayed. But the Christians, to avoid as much as possible the usages of the Jews, turned their faces towards the East.\* Whatever was the cause, the ancient Christians used generally to look towards the East when they prayed, as is evident from the testimony of Justin Martyr, St. Clement of Alexandria, and St. Basil—all men of high reputation, and living at a period when the Christian Church was in its infancy.

Another general usage was to stand whilst reading the gospel ; and this was ever a practice amongst the primitive Christians in all parts of Christendom, from the time of the Apostles. When Sozomen speaks of the practices observed in many churches, he confesses his astonishment at the impudence of the bishop of Alexandria, who presumed to sit whilst reading the gospel. “ Truly, (said the historian,) I never saw such a thing before, nor have I heard of any other person who was guilty of such presumption and immorality.”† Another ancient writer relates of Theophilus, bishop of Judea, that, amongst many other unbecoming things which he reformed there, he restored the ancient and commendable discipline of standing whilst reading the gospel.‡

We will now say a few words in relation to the manner of conducting domestic worship, amongst the primitive Christians. As soon as the family arose from their beds, the master of the house called them to attend to prayers, which were performed by himself, except a clergyman was present. It is probable that the Creed, or a confession of their faith, was recited, containing their belief as orthodox Christians. The children and servants were then instructed in the most important doctrines of religion. It is certain that some portion of the scripture was also read, as the Apostle exhorts : “ Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you in all wisdom.” *Colossians*, iii. 16.

About midday, before dinner, a portion of scripture or of a homily was again read ; and, when food was set upon the

\* *Warren's Impart. Churchman*, c. 8. p. 165.

† *Hist. Eccles. l. 7. c. 19.*

‡ *Philostorg. Hist. Eccles. l. 3. p. 29.*

table, a blessing was asked upon it, generally in the following words: "Do thou, who feedest every creature, grant that we may receive the present food with thy blessing. Thou, Lord, hast said, 'If they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them, if they believe in thee.' Take away, therefore, O Lord, who art the Lord of power and glory, every thing that may be destructive or unhealthy in our food at this time."\* Whilst at the table, they were accustomed to sing hymns, and songs of praise and thanksgiving—a practice highly commended by Chrysostom; and he encourages men to commit pious stanzas to memory, that they might sing them when at their work, but especially whilst eating, inasmuch as such songs are an excellent remedy against the temptations and wiles of the devil. "For (said he) as Satan is not at any time more likely to ensnare us than when we are eating, either by intemperance or by vain conversation; so we ought to arm ourselves against him by singing with grace in our hearts to God."† Here we see how cautious the ancient Christians were, lest their souls should perish whilst they were feeding their bodies.

In the evening, all the family were called together the third time, for the solemn exercise of prayer, before they retired to rest; and at midnight the clergy rose to sing praises to God.‡ It is probable that this practice was commenced in times of persecution, when its observance in the day time would have placed the lives of the family in jeopardy: and, to show that their zeal was not waxing cold, the same practice was continued after the persecution of the Church had ceased.

"Wherefore," saith the Apostle, "we, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear." *Heb. xii. 28.* This rule, by divine assistance, the ancient Christians diligently followed, as they were truly pilgrims in this world. Their affections were on things above, and their conversation was in heaven. Their houses and fields, were reverberating the sound of hymns and spiritual songs.§

\* *Orig. in Job. l. 2. p. 36.*

† *Chrysos. in Ps. 41. p. 147.*

‡ *Clem. Alex. Pædag. l. 2, c. 9. p. 185.*

§ *Cave's Prim. Christianity, pt. 1. c. 9.*

It is said of JAMES, surnamed THE JUST, that he knelt and prayed so often that his knees had become hard like stones. Constantine the Great, although he was emperor of the world, and had so much of the cares and anxieties of government resting upon his mind, was in the daily habit of retiring to his closet at an appointed hour, to pray,—whatever other affairs were demanding his attention; and, to manifest to the world his delight in this sacred exercise, he caused his image to be stamped on the gold and silver coin, in the act of kneeling, with his arms spread and his eyes directed towards heaven.\* THEODOSIUS (another good emperor) would not taste even a fig until he had given thanks to God.† It is also said of him, that he rose every day with the dawn for the purpose of singing Psalms with his sisters; and that he was as well versed in the scriptures as any bishop in his kingdom. Thus the hearts of the ancient Christians, rich and poor, were inflamed with zeal for the service of God, “knowing that of the Lord they should receive the reward of the inheritance.”

\* *Euseb. Vid. Constant. l. 2. c. 2.*

† *Socr. Hist. Eccles. l. 1. p. 2. & l. 7. c. 22.*

CHAPTER VIII.—*A description of the places of worship made use of by the Primitive Christians—The upper apartments—The various signification of the word CHURCH in the New Testament—The divisions in the ancient Churches—Schism to be preached out of the Churches—Bells.*

As it is impossible to accomplish any work properly without a convenient place to perform the same, so an appointed place is absolutely necessary to perform the service of God, in order that Christians may assemble to worship the Infinite Majesty, the Lord of Heaven and earth. And truly a place intended for this glorious purpose ought to be as neat and as seemly as it can be conveniently made. When king David gives directions to his son Solomon, respecting the building of the temple, he commands that it should be "exceeding magnificent of frame and of glory through all countries." 1 Chron. xxii. 5. The reason he assigns for this is excellent, as well right; for, said he, "the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God."

It was here that Jesus Christ manifested so great a zeal, (although he was meekness itself,) when he made a scourge of small cords to expel the buyers and sellers. *John* ii. 15. This is the place which he would not "suffer any man to carry any vessel through," (*Mark* xi. 16,) and the place where the Apostles began to meet after the resurrection of Christ: for they "were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen." *Luke* xxiv. 53. When St. Luke says that the Apostles, after Christ's ascension, went into an "upper room," (*Acts* i. 13,) we are to understand one of the upper rooms of the temple;\* for there were many apartments, one above the other: (*1 Kings* vi, 6:) and when they had no opportunity to enter the lower apartments where the Jews held the worship of God, they ascended into one of the upper apartments, which were open, at least during the day. And when the same evangelist, in another place, says, "And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house," (*Acts* ii. 46,) we are to understand that the Apostles, having performed their usual devo-

\* *Vid. Hammond in Loc.*

tions in the temple, returned to receive the sacrament at home, (as it is explained in the margin of some Bibles;) that is, in one of the upper apartments of the temple.

In this manner the Apostles performed their duties whilst preaching the Gospel at Jerusalem, which was for the space of about ten years. Before we proceed to describe the places of worship made use of in the following ages, it will be necessary, perhaps, to mention a few of the different significations attached to the word *Church* in the New Testament.

1st. The word is taken for a certain number of people, whether good or bad, believers or unbelievers; as we gather from *Acts* xix. 41. The mob who had caused an uproar in the city of Ephesus, consisting of craftsmen, makers of images, &c. are called the church. According to our translation, it reads, "And when he had dismissed the assembly;" but, if it had been translated according to the Greek,\* it would have been, "And when he had dismissed the church." This church was thus made up of the most abandoned characters:

2d. A church is taken for a number of Christians professing faith in Christ; as in *Col.* iv. 15—"Nymphas and the church which is in his house." *Rom.* xvi. 5. "Greet the church that is in their house." The meaning is, undoubtedly, the family who profess to believe in Christ:

3d. The church is also taken for the place where Christians meet to worship; as in *Cor.* xi. 22—"What! have ye not houses to eat and drink in, or despise ye the church of God?" The Apostle here makes a distinction between the church, or the place where the public service of God was held, and their dwelling-houses. If they kept intemperate feasts, and filled themselves to excess in their love feasts, it was much more becoming that this should be done in their houses, than in the church consecrated to the service of God.

The word *Church* is used in the same sense in the writings of the ancient Fathers. Clement of Alexandria exhorts the women to enter the church with all possible modesty and humility; and the priests of Rome, writing to St. Cyprian about the manner of admitting to the communion of the Church persons who had depied the faith in times of persecution, say

\* *Apcluse ten Eklesian.* Gr.

(among other things) that they should come to the door of the church, and no further.\*

In times of persecution, when the bodies, books, and churches of the Christians were torn, burnt, and destroyed, (and such bloody occurrences were common in every part of Christendom during the first three ages,) they assembled wherever they were able—often in dens and caves of the earth, or in places where their meeting would be secret and unknown to their enemies. But, as soon as they were favored with liberty of conscience and a short respite from persecution, their churches were built in a neat and beautiful style, and were always set apart from all common service : and the next thing to keeping a clean heart, was to preserve their churches clean and decent. There were no interments made in the churches in ancient times. That practice would then have been considered loathsome. It was as late as the year 800, when they first began to bury in any parts or corners of towns or cities;† and it was not for a considerable time afterwards that the practice of burying in the churches commenced. It is therefore evident that the Christians had churches set apart and consecrated to the worship of God, from the time when they first received that appellation.

The next thing to be considered is, what kind of edifices they were. After the supreme government had embraced the Christian religion, the churches were generally erected on an eminence, to signify, probably, the heavenly principle of raising our hearts above this world. They were built with one end pointing directly toward the East. This custom was adopted at a very early time, as will appear from the testimony of Tertullian, who wrote about the third century : “ The house of our inoffensive religion, (said he,) is erected on a hill in the presence of all, and is directed towards the light, as the form of the Holy Ghost, and towards the East, as the place that signifies Christ.‡

In the former churches there were three apartments, which were appropriated to various kinds of hearers. The first

\* *Adeant ad Limen Ecclesie. ad Cypr. Ep. 31. 7. p. 7.*

† *Spelm. Concil Brit. p. 11.*

‡ *Tertul. advers Valentin. p. 251.*

was the foremost part of the church, where the congregation entered : here, at the back of the door, were the catechumens, or the children of unbelieving parents, who were taught in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, and thus prepared for baptism ; and here also was placed the baptistry, or font. The same apartment, a little higher up, was appropriated to that class of hearers who were judged unfit to receive the communion, and yet were not guilty of any thing demanding excommunication. The second apartment was the middle of the church, which was occupied by the faithful—the males on one side, and the females on the other ; for they were not permitted to be mixed together : in this part of the church, also, were the reading-desk and pulpit. In the third apartment was the chancel, where none but the clergy and the emperor of Greece, (who was present once a year, probably on Easter-day,) were permitted to enter. On the upper side of the communion table, or the altar, was the throne of the bishop, and lower down there were two rows of seats for the elders, but no deacon was permitted to sit there.\*

In these happy times, when good order was observed in Church and State, none were permitted to dissent from the Church and hold separate meetings in houses ; and, if any headstrong person presumed to transgress, he was condemned forthwith, according to the decision of an assembly of bishops. The fifth canon of the assembly of Antioch, held A.D. 341, decreed as follows : “ The priest who will despise the bishop, and separate and hold different meetings, setting up one altar against another, (that is, holding unlawful and separate meetings,) let him be deposed and silenced as a presumptuous seeker for office ; and let his followers be excommunicated as tumultuous persons, and promoters of schism and division.” But this was not to be done until the offenders had been thrice cautioned and admonished.†

Lest any one should suppose that this was a mere threat, I will add an example showing how the Church acted in such cases. EUSTATHIUS, bishop of Sebastia, about the time that the assembly just mentioned was held, transgressed against this

\* *Vid. Cave's Prim. Christianity, pt. 1. c. 6. p. 138.*

† *Const. Apost. Can. & Concil. Antioch. Can. 5.*



law, in the first place, by holding meetings in private houses: he then began to despise and censure the priests who were married, and asserted that a rich man could not enter into the kingdom of heaven—that the Lord's day was the most proper day to fast; with many other things contrary to the creed of the Catholic Church. As soon as the orthodox bishops were informed of these things, they met at Gangra, the metropolis of Paphlagonia, and by their unanimous decision Eustathius and his followers were excommunicated; and the two following canons were adopted, in order to preserve peace thereafter in the churches: 1st. Whosoever speaks contemptuously of the house of God, let him be accursed: 2d. Whosoever presumes to preach out of the churches, secretly, in houses, despising the Church by doing such things out of it as ought to be done only in it, let him be accursed.\* Hence, it is evident that the ancient Christians adhered steadfastly to the Apostolic injunction—"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines." *Heb. xiii. 9.*

It is very easy to prove that the primitive Christians paid no respect, much less any kind of religious worship, to images. Their opposition to them was so great, that they would not allow them to be erected in the churches, even as ornaments. This will appear by that singular story related by a clergyman named EPIPHANIUS: "When I came (said he) on my journey to Anablatha, a hamlet in Palestine, I turned into the church to pray. There I saw a cloth hung above the door with the image of Christ, or of some saint, painted upon it. When I reflected that such an abomination was altogether contrary to scripture, I took hold of it, and tore it, and advised the clergy of the place to give it to some poor person, to make a shroud, rather than have it with images on it in the church."† This was written about the year 390, to the right reverend JOHN, bishop of Jerusalem, in whose diocese the occurrence took place. Nor was this the opinion of an individual merely, but the setting up of images in the churches was forbidden in the first four ages throughout Christendom, as is evident from the decision of the assembly

\* *Hieron. Tom. 2. p. 161.*

† *Hieron. Tom. 2. p. 161.*

held in Spain, A.D. 305, where the setting up of images in churches was forbidden, as well as the painting of the object of their worship on the wall.\* Such weighty expressions as these against honoring images cannot be answered by the most crafty Papist.

Whether there were bells in the churches in the first ages, is a doubtful matter; but, at whatever time they were introduced, they certainly answer an excellent purpose; and it is nothing less than sacrilege to carry them away, as the following narration abundantly proves: Dr. ARTHUR BULKLEY was consecrated bishop of Bangor, on the 20th of December, 1541. From covetous motives, he sold five bells which were in the cathedral at that place, and hastened to the sea shore, to see them put on board a ship; but he had scarcely gone three steps on his way home, when he became suddenly blind, and his sight was never restored.†

History also informs us that, when EDGAR, king of the Saxons, A.D. 975, was fighting with the inhabitants of Glamorganshire, amongst other sacrilegious acts, he robbed the church of Llanilltud of its bell, and carried it away. The next day, as he was reclining upon his bed, he thought that some one was piercing him with a spear: he directed the bell & all other articles belonging to the church to be restored; but, notwithstanding this token of repentance, he died within nine days in the most horrible manner.‡

But to conclude this part of our history. As soon as kings and emperors became professors of the Christian religion, and were, according to the prophecy, nursing fathers and protectors of the same, (*Isa. xlix. 23.*) they did not consider any thing too costly or valuable to adorn and beautify the churches. We have a very remarkable account of the judgment of God overtaking two presumptuous noblemen, named JULIAN and FELIX, who polluted and intended to rob that great and excellent church at Antioch, A.D. 362.§ Julian went straight to the altar, and, by way of derision, treated it with indecen-

\* *Concil. Illib. Con.* 36.

† *Goodwin's Catalogue of Bishops*, p. 540.

‡ *Spelman's History of Sacrilege*, p. 110.

§ *Ibid* p. 85.

cy, saying that God did not notice such a small contempt as that. Felix, his companion, when he saw the gold and silver vessels, and the priests' habiliments, said, "Behold the pomp and grandeur with which the son of Mary is attended." But let every one calmly consider the judgment which overtook them. The bowels of Julian rotted within him, and his excrements and urine passed through his mouth: his death was speedy, miserable, and awful. Felix suffered on the spot the weight of the hand which he had blasphemed; for his blood streamed without abatement from his mouth and nostrils, until he died. These were two remarkable examples of the judgment of God, (for the warning of others,) against sacrilege and blasphemy.



CHAPTER IX.—*The virtues of the Primitive Christians generally; their humility, chastity, patience, &c.—The different modes of putting them to death—Their obedience to the superior powers.*

The following virtues were the jewels which made the lives of the primitive Christians shine with so much lustre, "Like apples of gold in pictures of silver." *Prov. xxv. 11.* I will commence with that heavenly grace, Humility; for our Lord begins his sermon with this indispensably necessary grace, and sets it forth as the first step towards a religious life: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven." And again: "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." *Matt. xi. 29.*

There were two particular marks by which the ancient Christians might be known : 1st. By their gentle, sober behaviour : 2d. By the gravity and decency of their apparel.\*

\* In confirmation of our author's character of the Primitive Christians, we extract the following account from "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." We are induced to do this more particularly, from a desire to repel an unfounded opinion which is generally entertained, prejudicial to the religious belief of Gibbon, the historian. It has been asserted that he was not favorably inclined to the Christian religion, and young readers have been cautioned against imbibing any of his sentiments. For our own part, we have read his excellent work with greater pleasure than we have ever derived from any other history ; and we have never had the least occasion to condemn his sentiments with regard to the Christian religion, or to doubt the correctness of his views. Those who peruse the following, however, will be able to judge for themselves.—*Pub's.*

"The Primitive Christian demonstrated his faith by his virtues ; and it was very justly supposed that the divine persuasion which enlightened or subdued the understanding, must, at the same time, purify the heart and direct the actions of the believer. The first apologists of Christianity who justify the innocence of their brethren, and the writers of a later period who celebrate the sanctity of their ancestors, display, in the most lively colors, the reformation of manners which was introduced into the world by the preaching of the gospel. As it is my intention to remark only such human causes as were permitted to second the influence of revelation, I shall slightly mention two motives which might naturally render the lives of the primitive Christians much purer and more austere than those of their Pagan contemporaries, or their degenerate successors ; repentance for their past sins, and the laudable desire of supporting the reputation of the society in which they were engaged.

"It is a very ancient reproach, suggested by the ignorance or malice of infidelity, that the Christians allured into their party the most atrocious criminals, who, as soon as they were touched by a sense of remorse, were easily persuaded to wash away, in the water of baptism, the guilt of their past conduct, for which the temples of the gods refused to grant them any expiation. But this reproach, when it is cleared from misrepresentation, contributes as much to the honor as it did to the increase of the Church. The friends of Christianity may acknowledge without a blush, that many of the most eminent saints had been before their baptism the most abandoned sinners. Those persons, who in the world had followed, though in an imperfect manner, the dictates of benevolence and propriety, derived such a calm satisfaction from the opinion of their own rectitude, as rendered them much less susceptible of the sudden emotions of shame, of grief, or of terror, which have given birth to so many wonderful conversions.—After the example of their Divine Master, the missionaries of the gospel disdained not the society of men, and especially of women, oppressed by the consciousness, and very often by the effects of their vices. As they emerged from sin and superstition to the glorious

If we examine their books, we shall find the following remarks

hope of immortality, they resolved to devote themselves to a life, not only of virtue, but of penitence. The desire of perfection became the ruling passion of their soul; and it is well known, that while reason embraces a cold mediocrity, our passions hurry us with rapid violence, over the space which lies between the most opposite extremes.

“When the new converts had been enrolled in the number of the faithful, and were admitted to the sacraments of the Church, they found themselves restrained from relapsing into their past disorders by another consideration of a less spiritual, but of a very innocent and respectable nature. Any particular society that has departed from the great body of the nation, or the religion to which it belonged, immediately becomes the object of universal as well as invidious observation. In proportion to the smallness of its numbers, the character of the society may be affected by the virtue and vices of the persons who compose it; and every member is engaged to watch with the most vigilant attention over his own behaviour, and over that of his brethren, since, as he must expect to incur a part of the common disgrace, he may hope to enjoy a share of the common reputation. When the Christians of Bithynia were brought before the tribunal of the younger Pliny, they assured the proconsul, that, far from being engaged in any unlawful conspiracy, they were bound by a solemn obligation to abstain from the commission of those crimes which disturb the private or public peace of society, from theft, robbery, adultery, perjury, and fraud. Near a century afterwards, Tertullian, with an honest pride, could boast that very few Christians had suffered by the hand of the executioner, except on account of their religion. Their serious and sequestered life, averse to the gay luxury of the age, inured them to chastity, temperance, economy, and all the sober and domestic virtues. As the greater number were of some trade or profession, it was incumbent on them, by the strictest integrity and the fairest dealing, to remove the suspicions which the profane are too apt to conceive against the appearance of sanctity. The contempt of the world exercised them in the habits of humility, meekness, and patience. The more they were persecuted, the more closely they adhered to each other. Their mutual charity and unsuspecting confidence has been remaked by infidels, and was too often abused by perfidious friends.

“It is a very honorable circumstance for the morals of the primitive Christians, that even their faults, or rather errors, were derived from an excess of virtue. The bishops and doctors of the Church, whose evidence attests, and whose authority might influence, the professions, the principles, and even the practice of their contemporaries, had studied the scriptures with less skill than devotion, & they often received, in the most literal sense, those rigid precepts of Christ and the Apostles, to which the prudence of succeeding commentators has applied a looser and more figurative mode of interpretation. Ambitious to exalt the perfection of the gospel above the wisdom of philosophy, the zealous fathers have carried the duties of self-mortification, of purity, and of patience, to a height which it is scarcely possible to at-

against pride and finery of dress : " To what shall I compare

tain, and much less to preserve, in our present state of weakness and corruption. A doctrine so extraordinary and so sublime must inevitably command the veneration of the people ; but it was ill calculated to obtain the suffrage of those worldly philosophers who, in the conduct of this transitory life, consult only the feelings of nature and the interest of society.

" There are two very natural propensities which we may distinguish in the most virtuous and liberal dispositions—the love of pleasure and the love of action. If the former is refined by art and learning, improved by the charms of social intercourse, and corrected by a just regard to economy, to health, and to reputation, it is productive of the greatest part of the happiness of private life. The love of action is a principle of a much stronger and more doubtful nature. It often leads to anger, to ambition, and to revenge ; but, when it is guided by the sense of propriety and benevolence, it becomes the parent of every virtue ; and, if those virtues are accompanied with equal abilities, a family, a state, or an empire, may be indebted for their safety and prosperity to the undaunted courage of a single man. To the love of pleasure we may therefore ascribe most of the agreeable, to the love of action we may attribute most of the useful and respectable, qualifications. The character in which both the one and the other should be united and harmonized, would seem to constitute the most perfect idea of human nature. The insensible and inactive disposition, which should be supposed to be alike destitute of both, would be rejected, by the common consent of mankind, as utterly incapable of procuring any happiness to the individual, or any public benefit to the world. But it was not in *this* world that the primitive Christians were desirous of making themselves either agreeable or useful.

" The acquisition of knowledge, the exercise of our reason or fancy, and the cheerful flow of unguarded conversation, may employ the leisure of a liberal mind. Such amusements, however, were rejected with abhorrence, or admitted with the utmost caution, by the severity of the fathers, who despised all knowledge that was not useful to salvation, and who considered all levity of discourse as a criminal abuse of the gift of speech. In our present state of existence, the body is so inseparably connected with the soul, that it seems to be our interest to taste, with innocence and moderation, the enjoyments of which that faithful companion is susceptible. Very different was the reasoning of our devout predecessors : vainly aspiring to the perfection of angels, they disdained, or they affected to disdain, every earthly and corporeal delight. Some of our senses, indeed, are necessary for our preservation, others for our subsistence, and others again for our information ; and thus far it was impossible to reject them. The first sensation of pleasure was marked as the first moment of their abuse. The unfeeling candidate for Heaven was instructed, not only to resist the grosser allurements of the taste or smell, but even to shut his ears against the profane harmony of sounds, and to view with indifference the most finished productions of

(said Clement of Alexandria) a conceited, proud man, who

human art. Gay apparel, magnificent houses, and elegant furniture, were supposed to unite the double guilt of pride and sensuality : a simple and mortified appearance was more suitable to the Christian who was certain of his sins and doubtful of his salvation. In their censures of luxury, the fathers are extremely minute and circumstantial ; and among the various articles which excite their pious indignation, we may enumerate false hair,\* garments of any colour except white, instruments of music, vases of gold or silver, downy pillows, (as Jacob reposed his head on a stone,) white bread, foreign wines, public salutations, the use of warm baths, and the practice of shaving the beard, which, according to the expression of Tertullian, is a lie against our own faces, and an impious attempt to improve the works of the Creator. When Christianity was introduced among the rich and the polite, the observations of these singular laws was left, as it would be at present, to the few who were ambitious of superior sanctity. But it is always easy, as well as agreeable, for the inferior ranks of mankind to claim a merit from the contempt of that pomp and pleasure, which fortune has placed beyond their reach. The virtue of the primitive Christians, like that of the first Romans, was very frequently guarded by poverty and ignorance.

“ The chaste severity of the fathers, in whatever related to the commerce of the two sexes, flowed from the same principle ; their abhorrence of every enjoyment, which might gratify the sensual, and degrade the spiritual, nature of man. It was their favorite opinion, that if Adam had preserved his obedience to the Creator, he would have lived for ever in a state of virgin purity, and that some harmless mode of vegetation might have peopled Paradise with a race of innocent and immortal beings.—The use of marriage was permitted only to his fallen posterity, as a necessary expedient to continue the human species, and as a restraint, however imperfect, on the natural licentiousness of desire. The hesitation of the orthodox casuists on this interesting subject, betrays the perplexity of men, unwilling to approve an institution, which they were compelled to tolerate. The enumeration of the very whimsical laws, which they most circumstantially imposed on the marriage bed, would force a smile from the young, and a blush from the fair. It was their unanimous sentiment, that a first marriage was adequate to all the purposes of nature and of society. The sensual connexion was refined into a resemblance of the mystic union of Christ with his church, and was pronounced to be indissoluble either by divorce or by death. The practice of second nuptials was branded with the name of a legal adultery ; and the persons who were guilty of so scandalous an offence against Christian purity, were soon excluded from the honours, and even from the alms, of the church. Since desire was imputed as a crime, and marriage was tolerated as a defect, it was consistent with the same principles to consider a state of celibacy as the nearest approach to the Divine perfection. It was with the utmost difficulty that ancient Rome could support the institution of six vestals ; but the primitive church was filled with a great number of persons of either sex, who had devoted themselves to the

wears costly apparel, such as silk, purple and scarlet, and

profession of perpetual chastity. A few of these, among whom we may reckon the learned Origen, judged it the most prudent to disarm the temper. Some were insensible and some were invincible against the assaults of the flesh. Disdaining an ignominious flight, the virgins of the warm climate of Africa, encountered the enemy in the closest engagement; they permitted priests and deacons to share their bed, and gloried amidst the flames in their unsullied purity. But insulted Nature sometimes vindicated her rights, and this new species of martyrdom served only to introduce a new scandal into the church. Among the Christian Ascetics, however, (a name which they soon acquired from their painful exercise,) many, as they were less presumptuous, were probably more successful. The loss of sensual pleasure was supplied and compensated by spiritual pride. Even the multitude of Pagans were inclined to estimate the merit of the sacrifice by its apparent difficulty; and it was in the praise of these chaste spouses of Christ that the fathers have poured forth the troubled stream of their eloquence. Such are the early traces of monastic principles and institutions, which, in a subsequent age, have counterbalanced all the temporal advantages of Christianity.

"The Christians were not less averse to the business than to the pleasures of this world. The defence of our persons and property they knew not how to reconcile with the patient doctrine which enjoined an unlimited forgiveness of past injuries, and commanded them to invite the repetition of fresh insults. Their simplicity was offended by the use of oaths, by the pomp of magistracy, and by the active contention of public life, nor could their humane ignorance be convinced, that it was lawful on any occasion to shed the blood of our fellow creatures, either by the sword of justice, or by that of war; even though their criminal or hostile attempts should threaten the peace and safety of the whole community. It was acknowledged, that, under a less perfect law, the Jewish constitution had been exercised, with the approbation of Heaven, by inspired prophets and by anointed kings. The Christians felt and confessed, that such institutions might be necessary for the present system of the world, and they cheerfully submitted to the authority of their pagan governors. But while they inculcated the maxims of passive obedience, they refused to take any active part in the civil administration or the military defence of the empire. Some indulgence might perhaps be allowed to those persons who, before their conversion, were already engaged in such violent and sanguinary occupations; but it was impossible that the Christians, without renouncing a more sacred duty, could assume the character of soldiers, of magistrates, or of princes. This indolent, or even criminal disregard to the public welfare, exposed them to the contempt and reproaches of the pagans, who very frequently asked, what must be the fate of the empire, attacked on every side by the barbarians, if all mankind should adopt the pusillanimous sentiments of the new sect? To this insulting question the Christian apologists returned obscure and ambiguous answers, as they were unwilling to reveal the secret cause of their security, the expectation that, before the conversion of



who has no grace in his heart? I can compare him to nothing with more propriety than to the temples of Egypt. If a person look upon the outside of them, they appear like so many beautiful edifices; but let him enter into one of them, and ascertain its original design: let him inquire the object of the precious stones which adorn it, shining like the stars in the firmament of heaven: let him ask for what purpose those exalted pillars, those gilded posts, were erected, and surrounded with so much splendor and magnificence; and he will be told that it is in honor of the object of their worship, which is there enshrined. And what is this object, but a cat, a serpent, or a toad? This splendid superstructure, therefore, is made to contain some reptile, or some frightful animal; for such were the deities of the Egyptians. In like manner, if you observe a proud man, he is outwardly adorned with gold and pearls; but look within him, and you will see a wicked and sinful heart, unruly passions, and all manner of uncleanness.”\*

Theodoret relates a singular story, which is applicable to the case in point. He says: “My mother, when young, was afflicted with sore eyes: and, when she could get no relief from physicians, she went to a pious man named Peter, and requested his prayers in her behalf. In order to render herself more acceptable in his estimation, (as she thought,) she anointed her face with oil, put golden jewels in her ears, and dressed herself in the most costly embroidery; but, as soon as Peter saw her, he told her of the vanity of her apparel. ‘Suppose,’ said he, ‘some expert mechanic should make a very ingenious image, and some unskilful workman should presume to amend it; would the artist consent to have his work thus disfigured? No: he would not. Will the Almighty, then, be willing that any one should presume to improve upon what He has made? And what better is your

mankind was accomplished, war, government, the Roman empire, and the world itself, would be no more. It may be observed that, in this instance likewise, the situation of the first Christians coincided very happily with their religious scruples, and that their aversion to an active life contributed rather to excuse them from the service, than to exclude them from the honors, of the state and army.”

\* *Vide Clem. Alex. Paedag. l. 3, c. 2.*

conduct in plaiting your hair, painting your face, and otherwise adorning your person, than a presumptuous attempt to amend the work of your Creator? But remember, young woman, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.' My mother then acknowledged her foolishness, and manifested her repentance; whereupon, Peter prayed, and she was relieved of her infirmity."\*

This heavenly temper, a meek and humble spirit, caused the primitive Christians to renounce the pomp and vanity and unnecessary things of this world. "Will not a knife cut, (said an ancient Father,) except there be some ingenious device upon the haft? Will not a table support our food, unless it be covered with fine linen? Will not a candle give light, except the candlestick be gilt? Our Lord ate out of a common dish, and directed the multitude to sit upon the grass: he washed the feet of his disciples, without calling for a splendid bowl from heaven. He also took water from the woman of Samaria in an earthen vessel, without seeking for a golden one."†

"We (said the Pagans to the Christians) fare sumptuously every day: we rejoice and are merry, as men ought to be; but you Christians are thoughtful, and refrain from public sports and honorable feasts." The Christians answered: "Very true: we do not join in your pastimes, for we have learned better things. What are your amusements, but the temptations of Satan, urging you into every species of vice and immorality? We remember our baptismal vow, in which we engaged to renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh. You are mistaken when you imagine that we are sad and sorrowful: we have a never-failing joy in our hearts, although we do not partake of the boisterous mirth in which you take so much delight. Our Lord has taught us to be meek and lowly in heart—to be of an humble and quiet spirit: we have, therefore, no pleasure in your feasts and sports; for we can see nothing in them but pomp and pre-

\* *Theod. in Vit. Petri*, c. 6, p. 343.

† *Clem. Alex. Paedag.* l. 2, c. 3.

sumption, revelling and drunkenness--things that are not convenient."\*

In the next place, we shall consider their Chastity--their carefulness to live honestly and undefiled, and the determined aversion which they manifested to immorality and indecency. "Our expressions (said one of them) are sober and chaste, and so is our general conduct; and many of us, although we boast not of the fact, always retain our virginity."†

SOPHRONIA, a woman of extraordinary piety and virtue, and withal highly accomplished, was considered the greatest beauty of the age. At that time, there were two circumstances which operated unfavorably to a quiet life; for that lascivious tyrant, MACSEN, was persecuting and tantalizing the Christians in every possible manner. Having often heard of the beauty of Sophronia, he sent two or three persons to bring her to him. In accordance with their instructions, they told her that, if she would go willingly to the emperor, and consent to his wishes, she would be exalted to all the honors she could desire. Sophronia, well aware that she had no means of escaping from their hands, apparently yielded to their solicitations, and requested them to wait until she put on her ornaments; but, instead of dressing herself, she took a knife, and, to maintain her chastity, gave herself a mortal stab.‡

The crime of Adultery was severely punished in the primitive Church. It was the decision of the Fathers who met in the year 315, that, if any one was guilty of adultery, he should do penance, or be under the ban of censure for seven years before his re-admission to communion: nor should he then be admitted, unless he gave evident signs that he hated and had forsaken his sin.

We will now speak of the obedience of the primitive Christians to the civil authorities. For more than three hundred years after the birth of Christ, the emperors of Rome, with very few exceptions, were cruel and remorseless Pa-

\* *Minut. Fael.* p. 10. *Ed. Par.* 1522.

† *Ibid.* 26.

‡ *Eusebi Hist. Eccles.* l. 8.

gans. During this period, there were ten dreadful persecutions of the Christians, in which they suffered the greatest tribulations, afflictions, and tortures, that the malice of hell and the ingenuity of man could invent, although they were never engaged in any insurrection, or excited the least tumult or disorder. It was not, at all times, because they had not the power to resist, that they submitted thus patiently; but they yielded for conscience' sake. One of them said, "If we were so inclined, we could soon raise an army, composed entirely of Christians, sufficient to subdue all our opponents; but for conscience' sake we obey, because our Lord hath said, 'Render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's.'" *Matt. xxii. 21.* In one thing, it is true, they did refuse to pay tribute. This was a tax exacted for the erection of idol images and temples. "Although we refuse to pay tribute, (said an ancient Father,) towards promoting the service of Satan, we are ready to support any good cause by our contributions, and are willing to pay even more than our due share of all other taxes."\*

When the Pagans upbraided the Christians for doing so little service to the emperors, they answered that it was a mistaken idea: "For (said they) we certainly assist the government, though not with human arms; and the more any one of us excels in true godliness, the more will he aid the emperor by his prayers--more, indeed, than the battles of thousands of armed soldiers."† Another said, "We pray to God for the emperors, that He would be pleased to grant them long lives, peaceable governments, secure courts, valiant soldiers, equitable judicatories, and honest and obedient subjects."‡

It would be easy to enlarge upon this subject; but it will be evident, from what has already been advanced, that the ancient Christians adhered strictly to the apostolic injunction, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers." *Rom. xiii. 1.*

\* *Tertul. Apol. c. 40.*

† *Origen, l. 8, p. 462.*

‡ *Ibid. c. 30.*

In addition to the virtues before mentioned, we shall further consider their steadfast determination to "hold fast their profession," and the patience with which they suffered the most cruel tortures for their Redeemer's sake; for "they had respect to the recompense of reward." *Heb. xi. 26.* This consideration, amongst others, affords a strong proof of the truth of Christianity; for, unless they had been strengthened by the Holy Ghost, they could not have been so willing to suffer, so undaunted amidst appalling dangers, or so immovable in their profession. "When we consider this," said one of them, "we have indubitable proof of the divinity of the Christian religion."\* "Behold," said he to one of the Pagans, "how all the world in so short a time have submitted to our religion! Behold the philosophers abandoning their long-cherished opinions, and the gentry relinquishing their schemes for self-advancement—drunkards becoming temperate, the lascivious chaste, the covetous liberal, and every sinner undergoing a thorough reformation! When we witness these changes, we are convinced that some power from on high must have effected them. Who, amongst your men of learning, would suffer such tribulations and persecutions in defence of their doctrines, as we do for the sake of Christ? When the great and renowned Aristotle was informed that the Athenians were about to call him to account for some of the opinions which he maintained, he fled with fear, like a coward. Would a Christian have acted so disgracefully? No: he would have parted with a hundred lives, had he possessed them, rather than have renounced his profession. When Porphyri, your famous philosopher, consulted the Oracle respecting his wife, who had become a Christian, he received an answer to the following effect—that he could as easily write on the water, or fly through the air like a bird, as turn his wife from the faith she had embraced.† Remember your own proverb, 'As immovable as a Christian.'"

Their courage did not consist in words only, but in deeds also. When the officers were sent to arrest the holy POLYCARP, he made no attempt to escape, although he had been admonished of their design; but said to his friends, "The

\* *Arnob. advers. Gent. l. 2, p. 21.*

† *Orig. Cont. Cels. p. 51.*

Lord's will be done." When taken before the judge, a flattering address was delivered, in the vain hope of enticing him to deny his Saviour, and sacrifice to idols. The reply of Polycarp was admirable. "For eighty-six years have I been the servant of Jesus Christ. During all this time, I have ever found Him a kind and liberal Master; and shall I now, in my old age, deny Him? No: I will not." The judge then said that, if he did not recant, he should be thrown amongst the wild beasts. "Do this, (answered Polycarp,) if thou pleasest; for I do not intend to return from bitter to worse." "Then I will order fire, to tame thy haughty spirit," said the judge. "Thou speakest (rejoined Polycarp) of fire that shall continue for an hour, and then be extinguished; but, let me tell you, there is a fire in hell, which will afflict the unrighteous with everlasting torments." The merciless judge, when he heard this, was highly incensed, and commanded him to be burnt immediately. As they were preparing to bind him to the stake, Polycarp said that the trouble was unnecessary; and that the God who had hitherto endued him with courage would now give him patience and firmness to suffer the violence of the fire, without being bound. When the fire was kindled, the flames soon spread around him, and a sweet-smelling savour filled the atmosphere. Notwithstanding these heavenly miracles, the unfeeling judge commanded him to be pierced with spears and spikes, until his blood gushed out at every pore, and quenched the raging element.\*

And so fervent and so devoted was the zeal of the primitive Christians in the service of their Lord, that a spirit of envy appeared to animate those who witnessed the sufferings of others, whilst they themselves were spared. A deacon, named LAWRENCE, when he saw the bishop led to the stake, wept because he was not permitted to accompany him, and cried out, "O my father, where wilt thou go without thy son? Why didst thou go, O holy bishop, without thy deacon? Thou never didst attend to holy things, but I was ministering to thee. Didst thou find me timid and saint-hearted? Prove me, that thou mayst know of what spirit I am." This revived the heart of the bishop, and he answered, "Do not think, my son, that I reject thee; but thou, who art so full of

\* *Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 4, c. 15.*

courage, art preparing for more suffering. Wipe thy tears, and take comfort, for thou shalt follow me in three days."\* Here we see the fervent competition which existed between the two, as to which of them should be the first sufferer.

So far were the ancient Christians from being wavering or inconstant in their profession, and so little were they afraid of suffering death, that they would not attempt to escape the most cruel persecution. "These little sorry fellows, (as a heathen nobleman is pleased to call them,) who flatter themselves that after this life they will inhabit a place of uninterrupted felicity, despise and make light of death, and many of them will yield themselves voluntarily to the officers for execution".† The governor of Palestine wrote to the emperor Trajan, about the year 104, as follows: "I am weary of punishing and executing the Galileans, (such was the appellation given to the Christians by way of derision,) agreeably to your injunction; and yet they will not cease giving themselves up to receive the punishment of the law. Although I take much pains to persuade them not to confess that they are Christians, yet my labor is in vain."‡

It must undoubtedly have been galling to Satan to see amongst the disciples of our Lord such courageous soldiers—men who esteemed their lives as nothing, whilst fighting in defence of the faith of Christ. So he instigated and assisted the emperors to invent new methods of torturing them, hoping that their courage would fail; but in this his hopes were disappointed. When LIVINUS (the predecessor of Constantine the Great) condemned forty pious men to be cast naked into a pool of water, on a frosty night, they consoled themselves with considerations like the following:§ "Is the weather cold and severe? The Paradise to which we are hastening is delightful and pleasant. Is the frost cold and bitter? The rest that remaineth is comfortable and sweet. Let us be patient for a moment, and Abraham's bosom will open to receive, to cheer, and to delight us. Instead of the light tribulations which afflict us here, we shall have eternal life in heaven. Our feet are now benumbed with the cold, to the end that we may per-

\* *Ambros. Offic. L. 1. C. 42.* † *Plin. Epist.*

‡ *Prim. Christ. Part 2. c. 7. p. 181.*

§ *Ibid. p. 193.*

petually triumph with angels. Let our arms droop down, that they may have liberty to be raised towards heaven. How many of our fellow soldiers have lost their lives on account of their loyalty to their earthly king! And shall we be unfaithful to the King of Glory? How many have been justly punished for their villainy! And shall not we suffer patiently for the sake of righteousness and religion? Inasmuch as it is the flesh that suffereth, why shall we spare it? Inasmuch as we must die, let us die that we may live forever!" Thus we see the magnanimity with which they suffered, and the steadfastness of the hope which animated them. Their love to their Creator tamed the violence of the elements, and their affection for heaven warmed their hearts, so that they felt not the bitter agonies of death.

That you may have further illustrations of the sufferings of the primitive Christians, we will add an extract from the Laws of Rome passed A. D. 253. It is in these words:\* "Inasmuch as we have received liberally, gifts and blessings from the gods, by which we obtain victory over our enemies, temperate weather, and an abundance of the fruits of the earth; inasmuch as we have experienced that they are bountiful and merciful to us at all times, satisfying us with every thing necessary: therefore, we unanimously command all degrees of men, children, servants, and soldiers, as well as common people, to sacrifice to the gods—to honor and worship them. And, if any presume to transgress this our law, in which we have unanimously agreed, we command that he be cast into prison without delay, and that he be there tortured and punished. If he will consent to turn from his disobedience, he may expect great honor from us; but, if he continue obstinate after being severely tortured, let his neck be broken, let him be thrown headlong into the sea, or cast to the dogs and to birds of prey. This is applicable especially to those who profess the Christian religion. But those who will be obedient to the command shall receive great honor and presents from us. Fare ye well."

This might properly be called a general persecution, when such a command as this was promulgated by the emperors. In the first three centuries after the birth of Christ, there were

\* *Prim. Christ. part 2. c. 7. p. 154.*



ten great persecutions. It would be impossible to give a particular history of the sufferings of every Christian in each or either of the ten, much less in the whole of them. I will endeavor, however, to give a description of the principal tortures which were inflicted upon them.

I. The Cross ought to be first considered, not only because it was the most ancient instrument of the executioner, but because our Lord himself suffered thereon. It is no wonder that Christians have been so repeatedly martyred in this way; for, if they thus dealt with the owner of the house, how much rather would they with his family. There are two horrible circumstances connected with this method of putting a person to death—the pain and reproach. 1st. It was painful, inasmuch as nails were driven through the hands and feet of the victim. These are the parts where the veins end, and are therefore more susceptible of pain than any other member of the body; and, as they are parts of the body most remote from the heart, which is the fountain of life, so he that was crucified was in agony a considerable time before he expired. 2d. It was a disgraceful death. None but traitors and slaves were executed in this way before the Christian Era; and, when Constantine the Great became emperor, he caused the practice to be entirely abandoned.\* He was not willing that malefactors should suffer the same kind of death as was inflicted upon the Son of God.

II. The WOODEN HORSE, called in Latin *Equuleus*, was a weapon by which the bodies of Christians were mangled in a most shocking manner. Judging from the name of this mode of torture, it is probable that boards were connected in the shape of a horse, to which the martyr was bound with a rope tight on his back, and the other end made fast with screws to the engine: he was thus dragged about and disjoined at once, with the most excruciating pain.

III. The WHEEL.—The upper part of the wheel was full of iron spikes, to which the martyr was tied, so that his body might form a circle around it. It was then rapidly

\* *Sozom. Hist. Eccles. L. 1. C. 8. p. 11. Edit. Lov. 1569.*

turned, and the Christian put to death in the greatest agonies. Sometimes there were iron spikes under the wheel, which tore the flesh of the sufferer by degrees. Many thousands were martyred in this way.

IV. BURNING.—They were sometimes roasted with slow fire : at other times they were suspended by an arm or a leg, and fire kindled under them. Sometimes they were placed in an iron chair, underneath which a fire was made : at others, they were cast into vessels of boiling oil.

V. Being thrown to WILD BEASTS.—The bowels of wild beasts have been graves to thousands of Christians. The Romans condemned none to this horrible death, but those of the basest character, and the most degraded malefactors ; amongst these the Christians were ranked, and were consequently thrown in crowds for food to ravenous beasts of prey. Hence the proverb, "Away with the Christians to the lions."

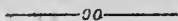
VI. DIGGING AT THE MINES.—*Ad effodienda metalla.\** This labor was performed chiefly by slaves and the lower class of people ; and the Christians were often condemned to it, and beaten with many stripes,† bound with fetters, and obliged to lie down at night amongst dirt and filth. Besides this, their oppressors often plucked out their right eyes, cut the veins of their left feet, branded them in the forehead, and shaved one side of their heads that they might appear like slaves.

These are some of the punishments which the innocent and unoffending Christians were compelled to undergo. It would be easier to count the stars of heaven, than to relate the whole of the sufferings which were inflicted upon them by these cruel barbarians. Sometimes a sapling was bent in the shape of a bow, and the Christian tied to the two ends of it : it was then loosened to straighten it, until the martyr was broken or cut in two. Sometimes the victim was anointed with honey, and tied to the top of the branch of a tree, on a warm, sultry day, to be tormented and eventually killed by gnats, flies, and wasps. But the God whom they served in spirit and in truth, gave them strength to endure all these

\* *Sozom. p. 10.*

† *Cypr. Epist. 77. p. 155.*

things with patience and resignation, for Christ's sake ; and there is no doubt that at these times they were more uniform in their devotions, more frequently engaged in prayer, more diligent in attending to the divine ordinances, than if they had enjoyed liberty and safety. For after some time, when they were restored to their former standing, the clergy put their wits to work to devise means for making a pompous appearance in some new form ; and the laity delighted in earthly things more than in glorifying God.



**CHAPTER X.** *The honesty of the primitive Christians in their dealings—Their hatred of unrighteousness and falsehood—The judgment of God upon liars—Their care for the poor—Their readiness to visit the sick—Their liberality to the brethren, and their unity and brotherly love—Numerous examples.*

When we consider the virtues already mentioned, which were like so many precious jewels adorning the lives of the primitive Christians, we may be assured that they were just and honest in their dealings, even if we had no further proof of it, for whoever serves the Lord God in the things required in the first table, will certainly be conscientious in discharging the duties enjoined in the second—that is, he will be honest and true towards his neighbor. In this the primitive Christians were so pre-eminent, that the heathens themselves were compelled to acknowledge that they were honest, without deceit in their words, or fraud in their actions. **PLINY**, who was sent by the emperor **Trajan** to enquire into the morals of the Christians, gives the following account of them : “ I can find no fault with them respecting their behaviour, further than that they have early meetings before or at the dawn of day, to worship Christ ; and then, they promise by an oath that

they will commit no wickedness or villany, and obligate themselves by a vow that they will neither steal, commit adultery, lie, nor deny having any thing given to them, if enquired for.\*

Although Pliny was a Pagan, the truth compelled him to acknowledge that the conduct of the Christians was blameless; and he certainly did not bear false witness, for they were not only upright in their dealings, but they avoided every appearance of evil. St. Austin, bishop of Hippo, says that he knew a man who happened to see a book offered for sale, and, upon asking the price, ascertained that the seller did not understand its real value, because his price was very low. He took the book, and gave the full price for it—probably twice as much as it had been offered for. If they did not take advantage of the ignorance of others in buying, neither did they in selling: it was no part of their business to impose upon the credulity of their customers by overrating the value of their merchandise, or by selling worthless articles for good ones.† The man who was guilty of defrauding and deceiving others, or of acquiring riches unrighteously, was accounted unworthy of the fellowship of the faithful, and dismissed from the church. The zeal manifested in preserving their society pure and undefiled was such, that none who openly transgressed could possibly escape with impunity.

They were no less commendable in their conversation. It was grave, deliberate, and sensible, and always based upon the simple truth, which was expressed without flattery, alike to the rich and the poor; for they considered falsehood as a seed sown by the devil in the hearts of men, from which would spring (unless speedily uprooted) poisonous branches, that would debase the faculties of the soul. When the Pa-

\* *Plin. Nat. Hist. Lib. 10. Epist. 97.*

† *We fear this trait of honesty and fair dealing will not apply VERY generally to the business men of the present day. There is too much self-interest, and too little regard for the truth, amongst us. This fault on our part, however, does not detract an iota from the uprightness of the primitive Christians. It serves rather to increase its lustre, and enhance its singular value.--PUB'S.*

gans ridiculed them, because they were so ready to suffer, when a few fair words would have spared them, and told them that they might conscientiously say one thing and mean another, the Christians resolutely spurned their counsel: for, said they, a lie, though unuttered, is as sinful as if expressed in words.\* Take it in either light, it is kindled by a spark from hell, and hell will be the portion of all who practise it, except they receive the grace of repentance. "Liars shall have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." *Rev. xxi. 7.* "When we are interrogated (said they) in the most particular manner, we never deny the truth; for we esteem it a very great wickedness to disguise or act the hypocrite on any occasion; and, although we might often deceive the emperor with falsehoods, we scorn to hold our existence on so frail and sinful a tenure.

It was the opinion of some of the ancient Fathers, if we may judge from their writings, that it was unlawful for a Christian to take an oath under any circumstances; but the majority of them were in favor of it, with the proviso that it should be taken with great deliberation, and only in cases of necessity and before legal officers.† The Christian soldiers, who carried arms under Pagan emperors, engaged upon oath to be faithful and true to them.‡ It is probable that the reason why some of the Fathers wrote against the taking of an oath was, that they misunderstood certain portions of scripture, or were anxious to avoid the possibility of perjury; for it is certain that they were as much opposed to lying and deceit as they were to Satan himself.

I will here relate an example of the judgment of the Most High upon three deceitful liars. NARCISSUS, bishop of Jerusalem, who served the Lord with reverence and godly fear, was so strictly impartial in chastising those who offended, that he gained the ill-will of many. Amongst others, there were three wrangling men, who became so highly incensed, that, in the heat of passion and malice, they went to the legal officers, and preferred charges of an atrocious nature

\* *Vide Just. Mart. Apol. p. 43.*

† *Athanas. Apol. ad Const. tom. 1.*

‡ *Veget. de Re Militari, p. 33.*

against him. In order to substantiate their complaint, one of them said, "If I speak falsely, may I be burned;" the second said, "If my testimony is untrue, may I be seized with the plague;" and the third, "If I accuse him wrongfully, may I be struck blind." The bishop, notwithstanding his innocence, retreated into the wilderness; but the hand of the Lord soon overtook his perjured accusers. The first, by a spark of fire falling on the top of his house, was burnt to death, together with his family: the second was disfigured, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, with some loathsome disease, of which he died; and the third, when he saw the just and awful judgment which had fallen upon his accomplices, confessed the whole matter, and manifested his repentance with so much grief that the multitude of his tears deprived him of sight.\*

We will consider, in the next place, the love which the ancient Christians displayed towards each other. This principle elevated their hearts so far above the feelings of envy and malice, that their greatest opponents could not charge them even with intermeddling, much less with hatred. They were so merciful, and so ready to assist one another, that a person could scarcely part with them. If one was honored, did another envy him? "I trow not." If one was unfortunate, would others rejoice? No: they would not. If any were reduced to poverty, would the rest abandon them? On the contrary, they would rather have perished themselves than have refused assistance. Indeed, they were so liberal and generous, so ready to assist and support each other, that their brotherly-kindness became proverbial amongst the heathen: "Behold how these Christians love one another."† They lived together like brethren. "The same God is our Father," said they: "we have the same spirit of holiness: we were brought out of the same womb of darkness and ignorance into the same light of truth: we are partakers of the same faith, and co-heirs of the same hope."‡ The Pagans say of them, that one of the principal lessons which their Master taught them was, that they should love and be at peace with one another. If one was oppressed, the others partici-

\* *Eusebi. Hist. Eccles. l. 6, c. 9.*

† *Tertul. Apol. c. 39, p. 38.*

‡ *Vide Min. Fel. p. 26.*

pated in his sufferings: if one was honored, the rejoicing was universal. This sympathizing and affectionate disposition, manifested as it was upon all occasions, was an undeniable evidence that they were the disciples of Christ. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." *John*, xiii. 35.

This will appear in a still stronger light, if we consider the diligence and untiring exertions they made use of to win souls to Christ, whether by the conversion of the heathen or by the restoration of those who had deviated from the apostolic faith. When Arius caused so much confusion in the Church, by denying the divinity of Christ, &c., oh! what sorrow of heart did the orthodox bishops and Constantine the Great feel on the occasion.\* And the anxiety was no less universal when that arch-heretic, Eunomius, (before alluded to,) re-baptized and transgressed the laws or discipline of the Church:† the bishops exerted their utmost powers of argument and persuasion to induce him to renounce his errors, and return to the path from which he had strayed. And when Eustathius opposed the privilege of the priests to marry, and threw aside the regulations of the Church by preaching in private dwellings, a meeting of the orthodox clergy was immediately called, for the purpose of excommunicating him.‡

As the soul is of more vital importance than the body, the primitive Christians were more assiduous in their endeavors to convert sinners, than they were in relieving the temporal necessities of the poor; though they were not deficient even in the latter. Justin Martyr, who flourished about the middle of the second century, said to the Jews: "We pray for you, and for all others who hate us, that God would be pleased to give you grace to repent of your blasphemy against Christ, that you may escape everlasting destruction. We pray for you, that Jesus Christ our Lord would have mercy upon you; for He has commanded us to pray for our enemies, and to forgive them for whatever injury they have inflicted upon us."

\* *Gregor. M. Dialog. l. 3, c. 1.*

† *Sozo. Hist. Eccles. l. 7, c. 26, p. 151.*

‡ *Id. l. 3, c. 13, p. 65.*

Although you are constantly pouring out your indignation against us, vilifying and ridiculing, scourging and tormenting us, yet we forgive you, and sincerely beseech the Almighty to grant you the grace of repentance and newness of life, that ye may know the truth."\*

Such was the heavenly disposition evinced by the ancient Christians. Let us endeavor to imitate them in their zealous efforts to exalt and extend the kingdom of Jesus Christ, in their love to the souls of men, and in their readiness to forgive all the contempt and dishonor cast upon them by their insatiate opponents.

Many of them voluntarily became slaves, that they might have an opportunity of preaching salvation to their masters.† They esteemed no labor too heavy, no sacrifice too great, in the service of the Lord their God. Had they been permitted to choose between the riches and glory of the world and the honor of being instrumental in the salvation of the meanest outcast, they would certainly have preferred the latter.

A remarkable story is related of the apostle JOHN. As he was journeying towards Ephesus, he met a young man, of handsome personal appearance, and endowed with good natural sense. The Apostle became very much attached to him, and took him to the bishop of the church of Ephesus, to whom he gave strict injunctions to watch over him with diligence and care, in the presence of Christ and his church. The bishop paid attention to him, instructed him in the principles of religion, and baptized him: then, thinking that he had fully performed his duty towards him, he gave him liberty to go where he pleased. But the young man, released from restraint, misimproved his opportunities, and soon associated with men of careless and corrupt habits, with whom he spent his time in idleness, banqueting, drunkenness, and every species of vice and immorality. Their evil courses rapidly led them to stealing and plundering: they formed themselves into a band, and made the young man their leader or captain.

\* *Dialogum Tryph.* p. 254.

† *Vide Pallad. in Vit. Serap.* p. 182.



In a short time afterwards, the apostle John returned to the bishop, and inquired for the pledge he had left with him. "What pledge?" said the bishop. "I mean," answered the Apostle, "the young man whom I left with you." The bishop was grieved, and said, "He is dead." "Of what death?" asked the Apostle. "My meaning is," replied the bishop, "that he is dead in sin. He has left my house, and is now, according to report, stealing and robbing on the mountains." This was distressing intelligence to the Apostle, who without delay mounted his horse and rode towards the mountains, where the robbers were said to be concealed. When the young man saw him approaching, his conscience smote him, and he fled. The Apostle pursued him, but, failing to overtake him, he cried out after him, saying, "Why, O my son, dost thou fly from one who is unarmed? Fear not: there is yet mercy for thee. Wait for me to talk to thee, for Christ hath sent me." The young man then stood still, and wept bitterly; but the Apostle comforted him with the assurance that God rejected no returning penitent: and they both returned to Ephesus.

I have given the foregoing narrative to shew how diligent and careful the primitive Christians were in relation to the souls of men; as well as to prove how great an influence the counsel of a pious man may have upon the most abandoned characters.\*

Having noticed the great attention which they paid to the concerns of the soul, (although we might have said much more upon the subject,) we shall now consider their liberality in contributing to the natural wants of their fellow creatures. This will appear, in the first place, by their regard for the poor; in the second, by their readiness to visit the sick; and in the third, by their generosity to their captive brethren.

1st. They were very liberal to the poor members of their society. They could not eat any delicacy with the least pleasure, if they knew that one of their brethren was suffering. "Can we rejoice (they would say) whilst our brother is

\* *Vide Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 3, c. 2 23.*

sorrowing? Can our hearts be at ease whilst he is in trouble and affliction? Can we eat and drink whilst he is in want? Will the Lord be pleased if we act in this manner to our fellow soldier? Shall he die with hunger, whilst we have an abundance? Praised be the Lord Jesus, for having taught us better things!"

So great was their liberality, that many of them sold their property, and divided the proceeds amongst their poor and needy brethren. The last will of Cesarius, a pious physician, on his death-bed, was in the following words: "I bequeath my possessions to the poor."\* Notwithstanding this laudable sacrifice of worldly goods for the benefit of the necessitous, the Lord favored the charitable donors with a sufficiency, and often in an unexpected manner. It is said that Epiphanius, a bishop of the fourth century, was so liberal to the poor, that he divided amongst them, not only his own possessions, including even his furniture, but also the treasures of the church, which the generosity of devout men had rendered very considerable. When the superintendent of the treasure saw the bishop thus lavish of what belonged to the church, he reproved him for being so open-handed to the poor, and advised him to be more sparing in future; but Epiphanius continued his course of liberality and benevolence. When the whole of the treasures were expended, a stranger entered the chamber of the overseer, and presented him with small bag of gold. No one could tell who he was, but many supposed him to be an angel.†

The generosity of this good bishop often subjected him to imposition. Historians relate that two wicked beggars made an agreement that one of them should feign to be dead, and that the other should stand beside him, to attract the notice of the bishop as he passed that way. When Epiphanius came to the place, the living man told him a pitiful story, saying that his dear friend had died suddenly, and that he had not the means of burying him. The bishop listened to his tale with pity, begged him to be patient, and gave him a piece of money. As soon as the bishop had gone out of sight, the successful beggar touched the cheek of his companion, and

\* *Bas. ad Sapron. ep. 84, p. 156.*

† *Sozom. l. 7, c. 26, p. 188.*

said, "Arise, we have wherewith to live merrily to-day." But his friend answered him not, and moved not, for he was really dead. When the other discovered this, he ran hastily after the bishop, confessed what he had done, and earnestly intreated him to resuscitate his friend. "Go, go, (said the bishop: "what is done cannot be undone."\*)

The truth is, the poor were looked upon as the treasures and beauty of the church, and considered as the warranty of their benefactors for the re-possession, in another world, of the good things they had given away in this.† When the emperor DECIUS, A.D. 253, commanded Lawrence, the deacon of the church of Rome, to bring all the treasures of the church to him, he promised to do so within three days. In the interim, he collected together the blind, the lame, the maimed, and took them with him to the emperor's palace. Upon being asked for the treasure, he produced these ragged and miserable beings, and said that *they* were the treasure of the church.‡

2dly. Another proof of their brotherly love was evinced by their attendance on the sick, as well for the purpose of supplying their wants, as of strengthening them in the faith. It is probable that many of the ministers at this time were physicians, and in the habit of administering medicine to the bodies, as well as admonitions to the souls, of those who were afflicted. And, if any one considers the circumstances candidly and impartially, he will readily allow that this was neither unbecoming nor improper; for the minister could ascertain whether the patient was likely to recover, and, if so, he could administer his prescriptions with comfort, and pray for a blessing with confidence: "For the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." *James*, v. 16. And, if the symptoms were unfavorable, who was better qualified to be with an invalid, to prepare him for approaching dissolution, than a minister? I think St. Paul acted as a physician, when he said, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine, for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities." 1 *Tim.* v. 23.

\* *Sozom.* l. 7, c. 26, p. 188.

† *Prim. Chris.* pt. 3, c. 2, p. 260.

‡ *Ibid.*

To return to the practice of visiting the sick. The primitive Christians were so meek and humble, that the most honorable amongst them did not disdain to enter the hut of the beggar, with as much satisfaction as if ushered into the king's palace. The greatest noblemen, if made acquainted with the suffering or affliction of a poor Christian, would willingly forego all the splendor and magnificence of court for the sole purpose of administering to his relief. PLACILLA, although the wife of an emperor, visited the poor daily. She made salve for them, and dressed their wounds, with her own hands. In short, she acted towards them as one of their own rank, rather than as an empress.

The third mark of their unfeigned love, was their liberality to their brethren in captivity. Nor was their charity confined to sending them alms and presents ; but many put their own necks under the yoke that they might set others at liberty. "Examples unequalled! We have known men amongst us who delivered themselves over to captivity for the purpose of liberating others ; and many hired themselves as servants for the sole purpose of supporting those who were needy." I will here relate the most remarkable occurrence that ever took place in the Christian world. In the Vandal persecution, in which the Christians were taken captive to Africa, where they suffered great tribulations, a bishop named PAULIN, being informed of their sufferings, was very much grieved, and determined that he would neglect nothing within his power to relieve them. He sold all his property, and sent the money to the captive Christians. A poor widow then came to the bishop, and earnestly begged of him as much as would redeem her son. The bishop said he was penniless ; but that, if she would take his body and sell it, she should have it freely. When the poor widow heard this, she thought he was ridiculing her ; but he assured her that he was sincere, and was ready to do as he had said. The widow at length was convinced of his good intention. They proceeded together to Africa, and the bishop went to the Governor of the country, and requested him to liberate the young man, and to take him in his stead. His request was granted, and the bishop remained there contentedly as a bond-servant for some length of time. The Governor became so much attached to him, that he promised to grant him any favor he might request. The bishop asked the emancipation of the Christians—an ob-

ject which, in his estimation, was of far greater moment than all the honors of the world. His request was granted, and the Christians were permitted to return peaceably to their respective homes.\*

• It is unnecessary to add any thing respecting their unanimity; for it is well known that they “were of one heart and one soul.” It is true that many wicked men arose, schismatics and heretics, who rent the church by disseminating certain erroneous opinions, contrary to the holy Scriptures; but it is not our intention to take any further notice of them at present. All the foregoing observations therefore are directed to the orthodox.

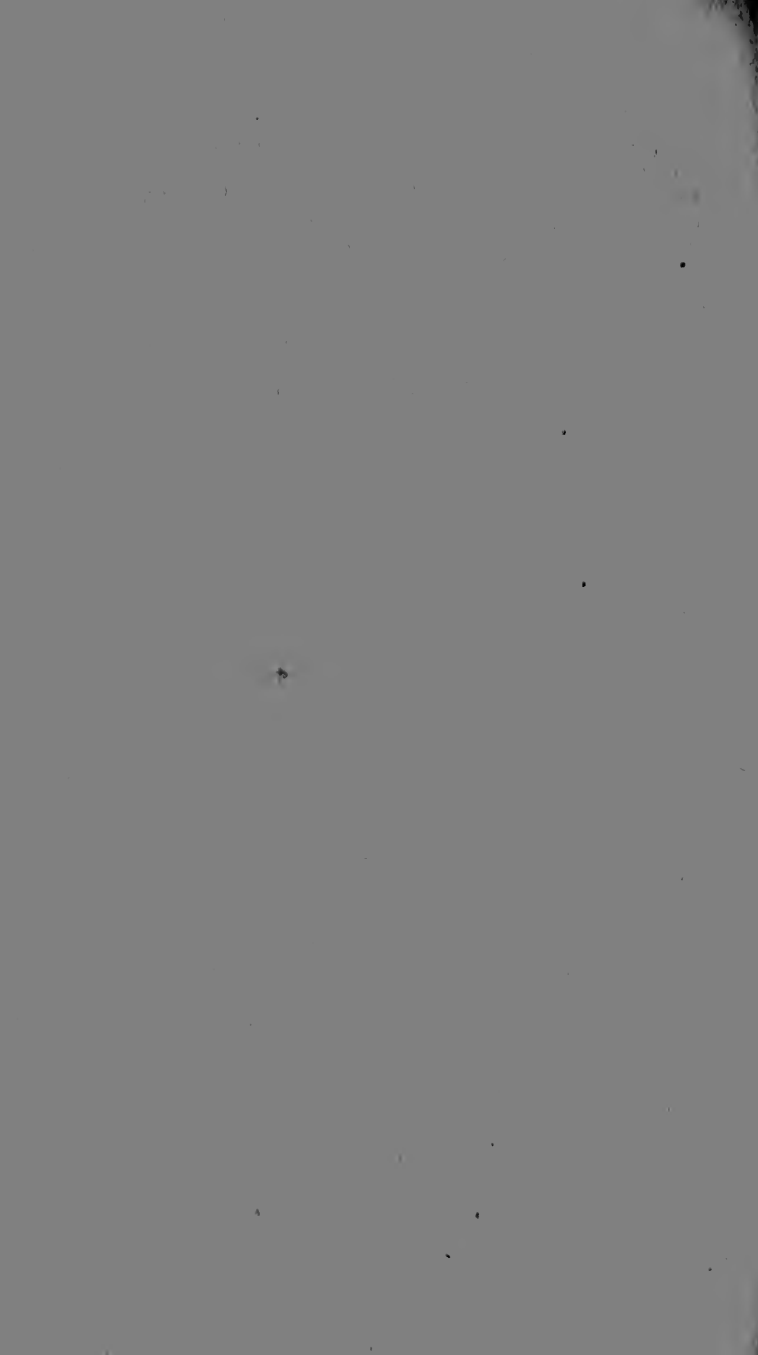
When Arius caused so much confusion in the church, by denying the divinity of Christ, &c., who can describe the sorrow of heart which his conduct gave to Constantine the Great?† Who can tell how many days he spent in mourning, and how many nights he passed in lamentation? He has asserted that the division excited by Arius was more painful to his mind than the effects of a general rebellion throughout the empire would have been. Oh, how anxiously he desired the ministers to be reconciled, and to heal the breach! He would rather have lost the empire, and every thing that was dear to him, than that this confusion and disorder should have taken place.

The same heavenly disposition was manifested in Gregory, bishop of Constantinople. When the counsel were disputing upon some immaterial points, the good man arose and said, “Oh, how unbecoming it is in you, who preach peace to others, to be contending amongst yourselves; I beseech you, for the sake of the blessed Trinity, to be at peace with each other.” He concluded his address in the following remarkable words: “If I am the Jonah that raises this tempest, cast me into the sea; that there may be tranquillity. I am willing to suffer whatever you please; and, though I am innocent, I will readily become an exile, that ye may have peace. But, whatever fortune may befall me, I earnestly entreat you to adhere to the truth, and to preserve harmony amongst yourselves.”‡

\* *Gregor. M. Dialog. L. 3. c. 1.*

† *Euseb. vit. Const. L. 2. c. 64.*

‡ *Vit. Gregor. Nazran.*



## ADDENDA.

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WE publish the following letter with pleasure, inasmuch as its perusal will go very far to correct a misrepresentation, which, undesignedly on our part, appears in the "Preface to the first translated edition of this work." Had it come before the public in its original form, without any explanation, we might have been charged with prejudice—a feeling which we have endeavored, as far as we were able, to avoid. The writer of the letter is a gentleman upon whose knowledge we can rely. He is a native of Wales, and well acquainted with the general history of his country; and we cheerfully submit to his correction of our error.

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### LETTER TO THE PUBLISHERS.

*June 7, 1834.*

GENTLEMEN :

I have learned with pleasure that the "View of the Primitive Ages"—a book so highly prized by lovers of antiquity in Wales, as being a compendium of the History of the Ancient Britons—is being issued from your press, in the English language. I doubt not but that the perusal of it will be peculiarly interesting, not only to the nation and descendants of the CYMRY in this country, but universally to the American people.

From an examination of the work as far as it has progressed, I must say that I highly approve of the Notes annexed, as explanatory and confirmatory of various statements in the history; and am gratified with those poetic pieces which are interspersed through the work, which serve to il-

lustrate and embellish it, and which, to say the least, have not lost their beauty by the English poet.

I however beg leave to inform you in relation to the character of the natives of the Principality in modern times. In your preface to the translated edition, these sentiments are advanced: "Although it (Wales) may not, in modern days, have given birth to many celebrated men; though it may not within our recollection have been famous for the literary enterprise of its people, or have sent forth to glorious war the choicest spirits of the age." I cannot at present refer you to any Biographical Dictionary; but I can assure you, without feelings of national vanity, that Wales to the present time has been distinguished for its illustrious men, as it regards Literature, Theology, Pulpit Eloquence, and Valour in the field of blood.

The inveterate attachment of the Welsh to the customs and language of their country, and the prejudices of their neighbors against them, have kept the names and characters of their illustrious men from public notice.

Out of a vast number of Heroes, and Bards, and Divines, I can mention the following names:—Sir Thomas Picton, Field Marshal of the British forces, was a native of South Wales; Capt. Jenkins, do.; Marquis of Anglesea, &c. Rev. T. Charles, B.A. of Bala, eminent for his zeal in the cause of Sabbath Schools, and a founder of the British and Foreign Bible Society, was a Welshman. He is the author of a Scriptural Dictionary in Welsh, in four volumes 8vo.—a work of considerable merit, and which is highly creditable to the learning, piety, soundness, and abilities of the author. His Dictionary has undergone three impressions.

George Lewis, D.D., published a large exposition of the New Testament in Welsh, besides a body of Divinity, and several other theological works.

Rev. D. Rowlands, Llangetho; Howel Davies; Peter Williams; D. Jones, Llangau; D. Davies, of Swansea; E. Jones, Pontypool; Dr. Phillips, Neuaddbwyd; Christmas Evans; John Elias; John Evans; Griffith Hughes; T. Griffiths, of Howen, &c. have been eminent for their pulpit eloquence in the Welsh and English languages, on each side the Severn.

The learned Sir William Jones was a Welshman.

Among her bards and lyric poets, she may number Rev. Goronwy Owain; Edward Williams, of Glamorgan; Rev.



Evan Evans ; David Wyn ; David Ddu ; the poet Dyer ; Rev. W. Williams ; D. Jones, Cymo ; Rev. Morgan Rhys ; Rev. T. Williams, Bethesda, &c.

Her literary men are Simon Lloyd, B.A. ; D. Peter, D.D. ; William Owen Pugh, LL.D. ; D. Owen, LL.D. ; Lord W. Herbert ; Lewis Morys, Esq. ; Dr. Abraham Rees, author of the *Encyclopædia* ; Dr. Price and Dr. Morgan, of London.

These remarks are not prepared with a view to meet the public eye : nevertheless, I trust in your candour that you will pay some attention to them, and correct the mistake which has been inserted, and which otherwise will be derogatory to the character of the Welsh people.

Your's truly,

EVANS MARTYN.

IN order to render this History of the early ages as complete as possible, we have resolved upon illustrating such portions of it as are but lightly touched upon, by the opinions and narrations of other historians. There are several very important subjects which our author has either totally omitted, or alluded to in such a brief manner as to deprive them of their greatest interest. These points will be found at length in the subsequent pages. The principal sources from which they are drawn are JOSEPHUS' *Antiquities of the Jews*, GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and MILNER'S *History of the Church of Christ*.

#### CHARACTER OF CONSTANTINE THE GREAT.

THE name and exploits of this renowned Emperor occupy a conspicuous place in this history. He was the first of his rank who embraced the Christian religion, and, as such, every thing connected with his public life must be interesting to the general reader. The character given of him in this work is more general than explicit or satisfactory. His principal virtues, it is true, are mentioned, but in such a way

as to excite rather than to gratify the curiosity of those who wish to be made acquainted with the bearing of his whole character, in his public as well as private capacity. The following description by Gibbon, we think, will supply all deficiencies.

“The character of the prince who removed the seat of empire, and introduced such important changes into the civil and religious constitution of the country, has fixed the attention, and divided the opinions, of mankind. By the grateful-zeal of the Christians, the deliverer of the church has been decorated with every attribute of a hero, and even of a saint; while the discontent of the vanquished party has compared Constantine to the most abhorred of those tyrants, who, by their vice and weakness, dishonoured the Imperial purple. The same passions have in some degree been perpetuated to succeeding generations, and the character of Constantine is considered, even in the present age, as an object either of satire or of panegyric. By the impartial union of those defects which are confessed by his warmest admirers, and of those virtues which are acknowledged by his most implacable enemies, we might hope to delineate a just portrait of that extraordinary man, which the truth and candour of history should adopt without a blush. But it would soon appear, that the vain attempt to blend such discordant colours, and to reconcile such inconsistent qualities, must produce a figure monstrous rather than human, unless it is viewed in its proper and distinct lights, by a careful separation of the different periods of the reign of Constantine.

The person, as well as the mind of Constantine, had been enriched by nature with her choicest endowments. His stature was lofty, his countenance majestic, his deportment graceful; his strength and activity were displayed in every manly exercise, and from his earliest youth, to a very advanced season of life, he preserved the vigor of his constitution by a strict adherence to the domestic virtues of chastity and temperance. He delighted in the social intercourse of familiar conversation; and though he might sometimes indulge his disposition to raillery with less reserve than was required by the severe dignity of his station, the courtesy and liberality of his manners gained the hearts of all who approached him. The sincerity of his friendship has been suspected; yet he showed on some occasions that he was not incapable of a

warm and lasting attachment. The disadvantage of an illiterate education had not prevented him from forming a just estimate of the value of learning; and the arts and sciences derived some encouragement from the munificent protection of Constantine. In the despatch of business, his diligence was indefatigable; and the active powers of his mind were almost continually exercised in reading, writing, or meditating, in giving audience to ambassadors, and in examining the complaints of his subjects. Even those who censured the propriety of his measures were compelled to acknowledge, that he possessed magnanimity to conceive, and patience to execute, the most arduous designs, without being checked either by the prejudices of education, or by the clamours of the multitude. In the field, he infused his own intrepid spirit into the troops whom he conducted with the talents of a consummate general; and to his abilities, rather than to his fortune, we may ascribe the signal victories which he obtained over the foreign and domestic foes of the republic. He loved glory, as the reward, perhaps as the motive, of his labours. The boundless ambition, which, from the moment of his accepting the purple at York, appears as the ruling passion of his soul, may be justified by the dangers of his own situation, by the character of his rivals, by the consciousness of superior merit, and by the prospect that his success would enable him to restore peace and order to the distracted empire. In his civil wars against Maxentius and Licinius, he had engaged on his side the inclinations of the people, who compared the undissembled vices of those tyrants, with the spirit of wisdom and justice which seemed to direct the general tenor of the administration of Constantine."

## TRANSLATIONS.

*Versification of the Latin verse on page 148.*

CLAUDIA RUFFINA, raised beneath the sun  
That shines on Britain's dark cerulean race,  
Whence comes it that thy heart is like our own?  
That thou hast such a beauteous form and face?

The Roman matrons readily believe  
That thou from them thy birthright didst receive;  
That, nurtured in this fair and smiling land,  
Thy name to them a monument will stand,  
When after ages shall have passed away—  
And be as much commended as to-day!

The bird of song, the beauteous nightingale,  
Would in its tribe thy presence gladly hail,  
And claim thee as a warbler, sweet and fair,  
As ever breathed its wild-notes on the air!

*Versification of the Welsh lines on page 197.*

## WOES OF TALIESIN.\*

Woe be to them who baptism receive,  
And who profess the Gospel to believe,  
Devoid of Christian love:  
Woe to the great, whose mouths the people bless,  
Who on dependents lavish promises,  
And yet deceitful prove!

Woe to the dronish Priest, who shuns not vice,  
Nor virtue in his life exemplifies,  
Nor preaches zealously:  
Woe to the pastor, who warns not his sheep  
'Gainst Satan's wiles, sin's carnal, fatal sleep,  
And all impiety!

\* *Translated and put into verse by Mr. Evans Martyn.*

Woe to the Shepherd, who his tender flock  
 Does not protect with his pastoral crook  
     From Roman wolves of prey :  
 Woe to the hateful Saint, whose privilege  
 He yields to popish sons of sacrilege,  
     Nor opes his lips to pray !

Woe to the Sick, the image of pale death,  
 Who sins commits as long as he has breath,  
     And no confession makes :  
 Woe to the Sluggard, who consumes his food,  
 Ungrateful to the Fountain of all good,  
     Nor labour undertakes !

Woe to the Worldling, who increases wealth  
 By hard oppression, violence, and stealth,  
     Through each revolving year :  
 And woe in doomsday to the Slave of Sense,  
 Who chastens not his flesh by abstinence,  
     Nor prays with heart sincere !

Woe to the Nobles and the Heads of State,  
 Who see injustice practised by the great,  
     And fully acquiesce :  
 Who in a Triune God do not believe,  
 Nor alms dispense, nor miseries relieve,  
     Nor grievances redress !

Woe to the wretch who grasps the heritage  
 From widows, and from youths of tender age,  
     Before the blaze of day :  
 Woe to the vile oppressor of the poor,  
 That takes his portion from his humble door,  
     And still retains his prey !

Woe to the express image of a fiend,  
 Whose malice burns 'gainst relative and friend,  
     And hates them in his heart :  
 Woe to the rich, who hoards his shining gold,  
 Who sees the naked perishing with cold,  
     And feels no inward smart !

Woe be to such as visit not the sick,  
 Nor pris'ners in their cells from week to week,  
 Without a fair reward :

Woe to the man who in abundance lives,  
 Nor food, nor bed, nor kind reception gives,  
 To servants of the Lord !

Woe to the crew who shall forever dwell  
 Within the regions of a dreadful hell,  
 Beyond life's fleeting scene :  
 Where doleful shrieks fill the infernal plains,  
 Uttered by victims of eternal pains,  
 Exposed to wrath divine !

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In the account of the wars between the Britons and the Picts, our author has asserted that the immediate allies of the latter were the *Irish*. All other historians coincide in the opinion that they were *Scots*. We cannot account for this discrepancy, nor is it necessary, perhaps, that we should. The main facts are still the same; and a solution of the question, whether they were the *Irish* or the *Scots*, is not essential to a correct understanding of the general history.

In the description of the massacre of the British noblemen at Stonehenge, (p. 92,) no mention is made of Vortigern, the king. This is evidently an omission, for other historians say that he was present at the banquet. Hume, for instance, observes that he was there, and was "detained a captive." We know not why our author neglected this part of the story; for it is not only an interesting incident in the history, but is also important as accounting for the subsequent conduct of Vortigern.

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## DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE AND CITY OF JERUSALEM.

FROM JOSEPHUS.

"Titus retired into the tower of Antonia, and resolved to storm the temple the next day, early in the morning, with his whole army, and to encamp round about the holy house.

But, as for that house, God had for certain long ago doomed it to the fire : and now that fatal day was come, according to the revolution of ages. It was the tenth day of the month Lous (Ab) upon which it was formerly burnt by the king of Babylon, although these flames took their rise from the Jews themselves, and were occasioned by them ; for, upon Titus's retiring, the seditious lay still for a little while, and then attacked the Romans again, when those that guarded the holy house fought with those that quenched the fire that was burning in the inner court of the temple ; but these Romans put the Jews to flight, and proceeded as far as the holy house itself. At which time one of the soldiers, without staying for any orders, and without any concern or dread upon him at so great an undertaking, and being hurried only by a certain divine fury, snatched somewhat out of the materials that were on fire, and, being lifted up by another soldier, he set fire to a golden window, through which there was a passage to the rooms that were round about the holy house, on the north side of it. As the flames went upward, the Jews made a great clamour, such as so mighty an affliction required, and ran together to prevent it : and now they spared not their lives any longer, nor suffered any thing to restrain their force, since that holy house was perishing, for whose sake it was that they kept such a guard about it.

And now a certain person came running to Titus, and told him of this fire, as he was resting himself in his tent after the last battle : whereupon he rose up in great haste, and, as he was, ran to the holy house, in order to have a stop put to the fire. After him followed all his commanders, and after them followed the several legions in great astonishment : so there was a great clamour and tumult raised, as was natural upon the disorderly motion of so great an army. Then did Cæsar, both by calling to the soldiers that were fighting with a loud voice, and by giving a signal to them with his right hand, order them to quench the fire. But they did not hear what he said, though he spake so loud, having their ears already dinned by a greater noise another way : nor did they attend to the signal he made with his hand, as still some of them were distracted with fighting, and others with passion. But, as for the legions that came running thither, neither any persuasions nor any threatenings could restrain their violence ; but each one's passion was commander at this time ; and, as they were crowding into the temple together, many of them

were trampled on by one another, while a great number fell among the ruins of the cloisters, which were still hot and smoking, and were destroyed in the same miserable way, with those whom they had conquered; and, when they were come near to the holy house, they made as if they did not so much as hear Cæsar's voice to the contrary; but they encouraged those who were before to set it on fire. As for the seditious, they were in too great distress already to afford their assistance towards quenching the fire. They were every where slain, and every where beaten; and, as for a great part of the people, they were weak, and without arms, and had their throats cut wherever they were caught. Now round about the altar lay dead bodies heaped one upon another, as at the steps going up to it ran a great quantity of their blood, whither also the dead bodies that were slain above, on the altar, fell down.

And now, since Cæsar was no way able to restrain the enthusiastic fury of the soldiers, and the fire proceeded on more and more, he went into the holy place of the temple, with his commanders, and saw it, with what was in it, which he found to be far superior to what the relations of foreigners contained, and not inferior to what we ourselves boasted of and believed about it. But as the flame had not yet reached to its inward parts, but was still consuming the rooms that were about the holy house, and Titus supposing, what the fact was, that the house might yet be saved, he came up in haste, and endeavored to persuade the soldiers to quench the fire; and gave order to Liberalius, the centurion, and one of those spearmen that were about him, to beat the soldiers that were refractory with their staves, and to restrain them: yet were their passions too hard for the regards they had for Cæsar, and the dread they had of him who forbade them, as was their hatred of the Jews, and a certain inclination to fight them too hard for them also. Moreover, the hope of plunder induced many of them to go on, as having this opinion, that all the places within were full of money, and as seeing that all around about it was made of gold. And, besides, one of those that went into the place prevented Cæsar, when he ran so hastily out to restrain the soldiers, and threw the fire upon the hinges of the gate, in the dark; whereby the flame burst out from within the holy house itself immediately, when the commanders retired, and Cæsar with them, and when nobody any longer forbade those that were without



to set fire to it. And thus was the holy house burnt down without Cæsar's approbation."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Now, as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury, (for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other such work to be done,) Cæsar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple, but should leave as many of the towers standing as were of the greatest eminency: that is, Phasælus, and Hippicus, and Mariamne, and so much of the wall as enclosed the city on the west side. This wall was spared, in order to afford a camp for such as were to lie in garrison, as were the towers also spared, in order to demonstrate to posterity what kind of city it was, and how well fortified, which the Roman valour had subdued; but, for all the rest of the wall, it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited. This was the end which Jerusalem came to by the madness of those that were for innovations—a city otherwise of great magnificence, and of mighty fame among all mankind."

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#### THE PERSECUTION OF DIOCLESIAN.

*From Milner's History of the Church of Christ.*

"THE fourth century opens with a persecution more systematically planned, and more artfully conducted, than those which christians had ever before known, and the reason why the church survived the storm and rose triumphant after her losses was, because her DEFENDER is invincible.

The church had long been in a state of ease and prosperity, and had deeply declined from the purity and simplicity of the gospel. God, for her declension, visited her with a rod. Besides the martyrdom of Marcellas, in Africa, an attempt was made, in a general, covert manner, to corrupt the army. It was put to the choice of christian officers to sacrifice and

enjoy their dignity, or to refuse and be deprived. Many lost their preferments. Some few were put to death as a terror to the rest. Dioclesian had long favored the christians, but he had now contracted a prejudice against them. He first used artifice rather than violence.

This emperor had a partner called Maximian. Under them were two Cæsars, Galerius and Constantius. Constantius had some probity and humanity. The other three were tyrants. The savageness of Galerius was the most ferocious. In the year 302 he met Dioclesian at Nicomedia, in the 19th year of his reign, and used every measure to instigate him to be more sanguinary and decisive against the christians, and urged to a general persecution. Dioclesian was for confining it to the officers of the court and the soldiers. A council of a few judges and officers was called: it was determined that the oracle of Apollo, at Miletus, should be consulted: the oracle answered in favor of a general persecution.

The feast of the Terminalia was the day appointed to commence the operations against the church.—Early in the morning, an officer, with guards, came to the great church at Nicomedia, and bursting the doors, found the Scriptures and burnt them, and gave every thing up to plunder. The two emperors, looking at the scene from the palace, were long in doubt, whether they should order the edifice to be burnt. Dioclesian, fearing a general conflagration, advised to its demolition. The Prætorian soldiers were therefore sent with axes and other tools, who in a few hours levelled the building with the ground.

The next day an edict appeared, depriving all men professing the christian religion, of all honor and dignity, exposing them to torture, and debarring them from the benefit of the laws in all cases whatever. A christian was found hardy enough, under the transports of indignation, to pull down and tear the edict. For his indiscretion he was burnt alive, and bore his sufferings with admirable patience.

In Egypt many were beheaded, others were burnt. They suffered with the greatest faith and fortitude.—To their last breath they employed themselves in psalms and thanksgiving. Phileas, a man of great eminence, suffered at Thebais; being asked how he was persuaded that Jesus Christ was God, he replied, 'He made the blind to see, and the deaf to hear, cleansed the lepers, and raised the dead.' When asked, 'Is a crucified person a God?' he answered, 'He was crucified

for our salvation.' The governor said, 'You are rich, and able to maintain almost all the province. I spare you, and advise you to sacrifice.' It seems that Phileas was very liberal to the poor. The governor added, "Thy poor wife looks on thee.' Phileas answered, "Jesus Christ is the Saviour of all our spirits: He hath called me to the inheritance of his glory, and he may call her to it.' A little before his execution, 'My children,' said he, 'you that seek God, watch over your hearts. My dear children, stick fast to the precepts of Jesus Christ.'

This persecuting governor, who treated the christians with the greatest cruelty and severity, added, 'No care ought to be taken of these christians: let all treat them as unworthy of the name of men.' Some expired under the cruel tortures inflicted upon them. Others, having been recovered by the methods taken to heal them, and being reduced to the alternative of sacrificing or dying, cheerfully preferred the latter.

One city in Phrygia, being generally christian, was besieged by armed men, and set on fire. The men with their wives and children were burnt to death, calling upon Christ, the God over all. All the inhabitants, magistrates and people, nobles and plebeians, professing christianity, were ordered to sacrifice, and for refusing suffered in this manner.

Some were slain by axes, as in Arabia; some by breaking their legs, as in Cappadocia; some, suspended by the feet, with the head downward, over slow fire, were suffocated, as in Mesopotamia; some were mutilated, and cut in pieces, as in Alexandria; some were burnt to death, as in Antioch. Some despatched themselves, to prevent their falling into the hands of their enemies, by throwing themselves down from the tops of houses: lamentable instances of impatience. But the reader will remember that the decline had been very great from christian purity; and that so many should suffer like christians, in such a season, can scarcely be accounted for, but on the idea of the Lord's reviving his work and ministering the Holy Spirit amidst their sufferings.

The persecuting judges exercised ingenious malice in the daily invention of new punishments; but wearied, at length, with murder, and affecting to praise the clemency of the emperors, as desirous to save life, contented themselves with plucking out eyes, and cutting off one of the legs. The number of those who suffered in this way was very great; and they were afterwards condemned to work in the mines.

At Antioch, Romanus, a deacon of the church of Cæsarea, was martyred. He, happening to enter Antioch at the very time when the churches were demolished, saw many men and women, most probably apostates from christianity, with their little ones, crowding to the temples and sacrifices. The same spirit which moved Mattathias, the father of the Maccabees, on a like occasion, was felt by him, but exerted in a manner more agreeable to the christian dispensation.—He cried aloud, and rebuked their cowardice and perfidy. But being seized immediately, and condemned to the flames, and fastened to the stake, while the executioners expected the definitive order of the emperor then present, he asked cheerfully, ‘Where is the fire for me?’ Cæsar, provoked at his boldness, ordered his tongue to be cut out. This he put out with great readiness. After this punishment he was thrown into prison, and suffer there a considerable time. In the end he was dismissed from life by strangling.

In the second year, when the persecution grew fiercer, imperial letters were sent into Palestine, commanding all men, without exception, to sacrifice. At Gaza, Timotheus, after many sufferings, was consumed by a slow fire; some were condemned to the wild beasts. While many apostatized to save their lives, six persons of Cæsarea, with excessive forwardness, ran to Urbanus, the judge, and offered themselves for martyrdom. They suffered, in conjunction with two others, whose spirit and circumstances in the manner of their departure out of life, were more conformable to the rules of the gospel.

The governors of the different provinces being now authorised to punish the christians freely, did it as their tempers dictated. Some, for fear of displeasing, did more than they were ordered; others indulged a natural savageness of disposition; while others considered that to shed blood profusely was the high road to preferment. Some, determining to torment and not to kill, studied those arts of torture which might keep life in being amid the keenest sensations of pain. Many efforts were made to recover the tortured, that they might be strengthened to endure further sufferings. A considerable part of Roman jurisprudence was then employed on this subject.

There never before had been so systematic and labored an effort made to extinguish the gospel of Christ. Satan had great wrath; and, when we consider how fiercely the enemies

of christianity set upon its professors, we have cause to admire the grace of God, who raised such a noble army of martyrs, in a time of so great evangelical declension, and who more effectually than ever baffled, in the end, the designs of the Prince of darkness.

In France alone, and its neighborhood, the people of God found some shelter. Yet was the mild Constantius, to save appearances with his superior Maximian, induced to persecute, not only by destroying the temples, but also by ordering those of his household to quit the service, who would not retract Christianity. By this means were the christians of his family tried. But the issue was contrary to their expectations. Constantius retained the faithful, and dismissed the apostates, judging that those, who were unfaithful to their God, would also be so to their prince.

It appears to have been the intention of the persecutors to have destroyed all records of christianity. Felix of Tibiura, in Africa, being asked to deliver up the scriptures, answered, 'I have them, but will not part with them.' He was ordered to be beheaded. 'I thank thee, O Lord,' said the honest martyr, 'that I have lived fifty-six years, have kept my virginity, have preserved the gospel, and have preached faith and truth. O my Lord Jesus Christ, the God of heaven and earth, I bow my head to be sacrificed to thee, who livest to all eternity.'

In Sicily, Euplius, a martyr, being asked, 'Why do you keep the scriptures forbidden by the emperors?' answered, 'Because I am a christian. Life eternal is in them: he that gives them up loses life eternal.' He suffered in the same cause, and so also did many others in Italy.

In the year three hundred and five, Dioclesian resigned the empire, and Maximian followed his example. They were succeeded by Galerius in the East, who ruled in the room of Dioclesian, and put Maximin his nephew, in his own place, and in the West by Constantius.

Maximin inherited the savageness and the prejudices of his uncle; and in Palestine and the more eastern parts, over which Galerius had ruled, he still continued the horrors of persecution."

In the fourth year of the persecution, Maximin exhibited spectacles in honor of his birthday.

Agapius, a christian, and a slave who had murdered his master, were both produced at the same time, and condemned to the wild beasts. The emperor, to distinguish his birthday by an act of generosity, pardoned and gave freedom to the murderer. The whole ampitheatre rang with acclamation in praise of his clemency. But he, disposed to punish the innocent and spare the guilty, asked Agapius if he would renounce christianity, promising him liberty on that condition. The martyr expressed his cheerful readiness to undergo any punishment, not for any crime committed by him, but for piety toward the Lord of the universe. He was condemned to be torn by a bear, and then carried back to prison ; and, after he had lived a day, with weights hung to his feet, sunk in the sea.

In the succeeding year a Tyrian virgin, Theodocia, not quite 18 years old, was put to death for owning and countenancing some christian prisoners. The judge, Urbanus, afterwards condemned them to the mines of Palestine. Silvanus, with some others, were condemned to labor in the brass mines, the joints of their feet having been first weakened by the application of hot iron.

Few persecutors exceeded Urbanus in malice and activity. He doomed three to fight with each other ; Auxentius, a venerable saint, he condemned to the wild beasts. Some he sentenced to the mines, after he had made them eunuchs. Others, after bitter torments, he threw again into prison. This monster of savage ferocity, having been afterward convicted of crimes, was capitally punished in Cæsarea, the scene of his cruelties, and by the same Maximin, of whose imperial savageness he had been the minister.

In the sixth year of the persecution, near 100 were sent from Thebais to Palestine, and were adjudged by Fermilian, the successor of Urbanus, to be lamed in the left foot, and to lose the right eye, and in that state to be condemned to the mines.

At Gaza, some were apprehended for meeting together to hear the scriptures read, and were punished with the loss of a limb, and an eye, or in a still more cruel manner. One Paul, being sentenced to lose his head, begged a short space of time to be allowed him, which having been granted, he prayed with a loud voice for the whole christian world, that God would forgive them, remove the present heavy scourge of their iniquities, and restore them to peace and liberty : he

then prayed for the Jews, that they might come to God, and find access to him through Jesus Christ. In the next place, that the same blessings might be vouchsafed to the Samaritans. The Gentiles, who lived in error and ignorance of God, were the next object of his charitable petitions, that they might be brought to know God and to serve him: nor did he omit to mention the crowd about him, the judge who had sentenced him, the emperors, and the executioner; and in the hearing of all he prayed that their sin might not be laid to their charge. The whole company was moved, and tears were shed. The martyr composed himself to suffer, and, offering his neck to the sword, was beheaded. Divine grace appeared in him, in a manner worthy of the apostolic age. Soon after, 130 Egyptian chieftains, having suffered the same mutilations which have been above mentioned, were sentenced by Maximin to the mines in Palestine and Celicia.

Fermilian, after having trodden in the footsteps of Urbanus in shedding christian blood abundantly, like him also suffered capitally by the sentence of the emperor.

Toward the end of the seventh year, the multitude of confessors in the mines of Palestine enjoyed some liberty, and even erected some places for public worship. The president of the province envied them the small cessation of their miseries, and wrote to the emperor to their prejudice. Afterward, the master of the mines, having come hither, divided the sufferers into classes. Some he ordered to dwell in Cyprus, others in Libanus: the rest he dispersed and harassed with various drudgeries in different parts of Palestine. Four he singled out for the examination of the military commander, who burnt them to death. Silvanus, a bishop of great piety, John, an Egyptian, and thirty-seven others, were, the same day, beheaded by the order of Maximin.

For eight years, the persecution in the East continued with little intermission. In the West, it abated after two years. The political changes in the empire account for the difference. Both in the East and the West, Satan exerted his malice in the keenest manner, in this last of the pagan persecutions. The Divine power and wisdom, in still preserving a real church on earth, were never more conspicuously displayed, since the days of the apostles. The time, for its external triumph, under Constantine, was then at hand. Those who look at outward things alone may be tempted to think how much more glorious it would have ap-

peared, without the previous desolations of Dioclesian's persecution; but, when it is considered how much christian doctrine had decayed, and how low holy practice had fallen, the necessity of so sharp a trial to purify the church, and fit it for a state of prosperity, is evident. Otherwise the difference between christians and pagans might have been little more than a name."

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### ARIUS AND THE ARIAN HERESY.

*From the same.*

"PETER, bishop of Alexandria, had suffered martyrdom under the Dioclesian persecution. At that time, numbers had recanted to save their lives, and, among the rest, Meletus, an Egyptian bishop. This man was of a schismatical and enterprising spirit, and, having been deposed by Peter before his martyrdom, separated himself, continued bishop on his own plan, and ordained others, and thus became head of the Meletian party. This, however, was not the only person who disturbed the peace of the church, and tried the patience of Peter. Arius of Alexandria espoused the cause of Meletus. Afterward he left this part, became reconciled to Peter, and was by him ordained a deacon. Arius, having exhibited a restless and factious spirit, was again expelled from the church.

Peter having been called to his rest by martyrdom, Achillas succeeded him in the bishopric, and from him Arius, by submissions, again obtained favour. Understanding and capacity will command respect, and these were undoubtedly possessed by Arius in a great degree. He was by nature formed to deceive. In his behaviour and manner of life he was severe and grave, in his person tall and venerable, and in his dress almost monastic. In conversation, he was agreeable and captivating, well skilled in logic and all the improvements of the human mind, then fashionable in the world.

Such was the famous Arius, who gave name to one of the most powerful heresies which ever afflicted the Church of Christ.

Achillas advanced Arius to the office of presbyter. Alexander, the successor of Achillas, treated him with respect.



and he appeared backward to censure him for his dangerous speculations in religion. Arius, through the pride of reasoning, asserted that there was a time when the Son of God was not, that he was capable of virtue or of vice, and that he was a creature, and mutable as creatures are. While Arius was insinuating these things, the easiness of Alexander in tolerating such notions was found fault with in the church. Necessity roused him at length, however unwilling, to contend, and, in disputing before Arius and the rest of the clergy, he affirmed there was a union in the Trinity. Arius eagerly insisted that, "if the Father begat the Son, the begotten had a beginning of existence: hence it was evident there was a time when he was not."

Many persons of a grave cast, and able and eloquent, like Arius, espoused and fostered the infant heresy. Arius preached diligently at his church, diffused his opinions in all companies, and gained over many of the common people; and Alexander saw the ancient doctrine continually undermined. Lenient measures and argumentative methods having been tried in vain, Alexander summoned a synod of bishops, who met at Alexandria, condemned Arius's doctrine, and expelled him from the church, with nine of his adherents.

Arius maintained that the *Son* was totally and *essentially* distinct from the *Father*; that he was the *first* and *noblest* of those beings whom God the *Father* had created out of nothing—the instrument by whose subordinate operation the *Almighty Father* formed the universe, and therefore inferior to the *Father* both in *nature* and *dignity*.

To all humble and charitable christians it appeared that to persist in blaspheming God was, at least, as practical an evil as to persist in drunkenness and theft; and all who feared God felt themselves obligated to join with Alexander against Arius. The christian world was now a scene of animosity and contention. The orthodox and the heretical did each their utmost, to support their several pretensions: practical religion was too much forgotten by both. The Pagan world beheld and triumphed. On their theatres they ridiculed the contentions of christians, to which their long and grievous provocations of their God had exposed them. Alexander repeatedly, in letters and appeals, maintained his cause, so far as speculative argumentation could do it, and proved his point from the scriptures; while Arius strengthened himself by

forming alliances with various bishops, particularly with Eusebius of Nicomedia, who supported Arianism with all his might. Near one hundred bishops in a second synod at Alexandria condemned Arius, who was then obliged to quit that place, and to try to gain supporters in other parts of the empire.

Constantine sincerely strove to make up the breach. He wrote both to Alexander and Arius, blamed both, expressed his desire for their agreement, and explained nothing. He sent the letter by Hosius, bishop of Corduba, one whose faith and piety had been distinguished in the late persecution. Hosius endeavored to make up the breach; but it was impossible. The two parties were formed, and were determined: worldly motives were too prominent in both, to admit of an easy compromise; and it was not in the power of those who loved both truth and peace, to sacrifice the former for the latter, consistently with a good conscience, however sincerely desirous they must have been of promoting both. The object of contention was not a trifle, but an essential principle in religion.

Constantine summoned the aid of the whole christian church; and three hundred and eighteen bishops met at Nice, in Bithynia. According to Philostorgius, the Arian historian, twenty-two espoused the cause of Arius: others make the minority still less. Many presbyters were there, besides the bishops. It is not probable that the whole number of persons assembled in the council was less than six hundred.

They met in the year 305, being transported to Nice and maintained there at the emperor's expense.

Before they entered on the immediate business of the synod, their attention was engaged by certain Gentile philosophers who appeared among them. Of these, some wished to satisfy their own curiosity concerning christianity itself; others, to involve the christians in a cloud of subtleties, that they might enjoy the mutual contradictions of the followers of Christ. One of these distinguished himself by the pomp and arrogance of his pretensions, and derided the clergy as ignorant and illiterate. On this occasion, an old christian, who had suffered with magnanimous constancy during the late persecution, though unacquainted with logical forms, undertook to contend with the philosopher. Those who were more earnest to gratify curiosity than to investigate truth, endeavored to make mirth of him; while all the serious were distressed to

see a contest apparently so unequal. Respect for the man, however, induced them to permit him to engage. He immediately addressed the philosopher in these terms; 'Hear, philosopher, in the name of Jesus Christ. There is one God, the Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible, who made all these things by the power of his Word, and confirmed them by the holiness of his Spirit. This word, whom we call the Son of God, compassionating the sons of men, involved in error and wickedness, chose to be born of a woman, to converse with men, and to die for them; and he will come again, the Judge of all things which men have done in the body. That these things are so, we believe in simplicity. Do not, then, labor in vain, seeking to confute things which ought to be received by faith, and investigating the manner in which these things may or may not be: but, if thou believest, answer me; now that I ask thee.' Struck with this plain, authoritative address, the philosopher said, 'I do believe;' with pleasure owned himself vanquished, confessed that he embraced the same sentiments with the old man, and advised the other philosophers to do the same, declaring that he was changed by a divine influence, and was moved by an energy he could not explain.

Here it is evident that this successful espouser of the truth stepped forth in its defence, in humble dependence on God to bless his own word with victorious energy; and it was evident, by the issue, that the faith of the vanquished stood not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

I fear we shall not find in the whole Nicene business so instructive a narrative. The emperor himself came to the synod, and exhorted them to peace and unanimity. A number of mutual accusations having been presented to him, he threw them all into the fire, protesting that he had read none of them, and charged them to forbear and forgive one another. He then gave them leave to enter directly on the business of the synod. They canvassed the doctrine of Arius, extracted his propositions from his own writings, and argued the subject with great vehemence; Constantine himself acting as moderator, and endeavoring to bring them to perfect agreement. But it soon appeared that, without some explanatory terms, decisively pointing out what the scripture had revealed, it was impossible to guard against the subtleties of the Arians. Did the Trinitarians assert that Christ was God?

The Arians allowed it, but in the same sense that holy men and angels are styled gods in scripture. Did they affirm that he was truly God? The others allowed that he was made so by God. Did they affirm that the Son was naturally God? It was granted: for even we, said they, are of God, of whom are all things. Was it affirmed that the Son was the power, wisdom, and image of the Father? We admit it, replied the others, for we also are said to be the image and glory of God. What could the Trinitarians do in this situation? To leave the matter undecided, was to do nothing: to confine themselves merely to scripture terms, was to suffer the Arians to explain the doctrine in their own way, and to reply nothing. Undoubtedly they had a right to comment according to their own judgment, as well as the Arians; and they did so in the following manner. They collected together the passages of scripture which represent the Divinity of the Son of God, and observed that, taken together, they amounted to a proof of his being of the same substance with the Father: That creatures were indeed said to be of God, because, not existing of themselves, they had their beginning from him; but that the Son was peculiarly of the Father, being of his substance, as begotten of him.

The majority of the council was convinced that this was a fair explanation. The venerable Hosius, of Corduba, was appointed to draw up a creed, which, in the main, is the same that is called the Nicene Creed to this day. This soon received the sanction of the council, and of Constantine himself, who declared that whoever refused to comply with the decree should be banished.

Here we have the testimony of nearly the whole christian world, in favor of the doctrine of the proper Deity of the Son of God—a testimony free, unbiassed, and unrestrained. How can this be accounted for, but hence—that they followed the plain sense of scripture and of the church in preceding ages?

Arius was deposed, excommunicated, and forbidden to enter Alexandria. The minority at first refused to subscribe, but being advised to yield, at length, by Constantia, their patroness, (the emperor's sister,) twenty out of the twenty-two Arian bishops consented. But, by the omission of a single letter, they reserved to themselves their own sense, subscribing not that the Son is the same, but only of the like

essence with the Father.\* Arius and his associates were banished into Illyricum."

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*Versification of the Welsh Poetry on page 216.*

How fine is the form of the beautiful Nun,  
 So honored in Erin, fairest isle 'neath the sun !  
 When thy father essayed to betrothe thee, young maid,  
 'Thine eye, in astonishment, leaped from thy head :  
 The pain which it gave thee was surely intense,  
 And wrapped in its folds every tremulous sense.  
 On the morrow, when Sol rose on mountain and field,  
 'Thine orb was restored, and thy countenance healed.

From the shores of Hibernia to Dyvi's famed stream,†  
 Tho' the distance was great, thou didst easily swim.  
 With the image of God‡ on thy raiment impressed,  
 Thou didst ride on the flood, as if taking thy rest.  
 No ship, in full sail, took thee hence from this strand,  
 Across the wide ocean to Cambria's land.  
 'Thine ark, hely Nun, was no more than a clod,  
 With which you did hallow the soil that you trod.

'Thy maidens, most lovely, and free from all stain,  
 Did follow, undaunted and true, in thy train :  
 As a band of fair sisters, united in love,  
 Like a fleet o'er the waves did they gracefully move.

When thy friends were ahunger'd, thy power was display'd,  
 And of rushes a feast (turned to fishes) was made.  
 'Thou didst live in full glee, for thy heart was at rest,  
 And sorrow and anguish had fled from thy breast :  
 No care on thy brow—no regret on thy mind,  
 Amid deserts and mountains sweet peace didst thou find.  
 'The favor of God upon thee was bestowed,  
 And much to thy virtue have Christians since owed.

\* *It is remarkable that this duplicity is recorded by Philostorgius, the Arian historian.*

† *A river in Cardiganshire.*

‡ *The Crucifix.*

A feast to thy memory (long may it live !)  
 Was appointed by Jesus, thy name to revive ;  
 And those whom He loves have observed it till now,  
 And on its return to His majesty bow,  
 With a rev'rence superior to that they display  
 On the advent, each week, of His own Sabbath-day !

*Translation of the lines on page 217.*

FIE to the relics of saints !  
 Fie to the foolish worship of dumb, formidable idols !  
 Fie to the Pope and his detestable mass,  
 His petitions, purgatory, and vended pardons & indulgences !  
 The faith of Rome, how fraught with absurdity & mischief !  
 To laud and reverence the Pope !

It is the faith of the mother of abominations :

A cruel faith—an antique, silly faith, the offspring of the  
 devil !

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*Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year  
1834, by GRIFFITH H. ROWLAND and WILLIAM SCOTT, in  
the Clerk's office of the District Court of the Western  
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